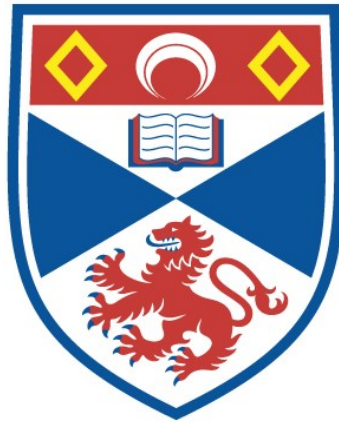


THE REVELATION OF THE QUR'ĀN TEXT AND ITS PRESERVATION

Che Omar Haji Awang

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of MPhil
at the
University of St Andrews



1989

Full metadata for this item is available in
St Andrews Research Repository
at:
<http://research-repository.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Please use this identifier to cite or link to this item:
<http://hdl.handle.net/10023/13544>

This item is protected by original copyright

THE REVELATION OF THE QUR'ĀN TEXT
AND ITS PRESERVATION

BY

CHE OMAR HAJI AWANG

Thesis submitted for the Degree of

M. Phil.

University of St. Andrews

September 1988.



ProQuest Number: 10166511

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 10166511

Published by ProQuest LLC (2017). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.
789 East Eisenhower Parkway
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346

Tu A830

Abstract

This study deals with the revelation of the Qur'ān text and its preservation during the lifetime of the Prophet and its compilation in the reign of Abū Bakr and further, the second compilation by 'Uthmān which was considered as the complete and authentic text of the Qur'ān.

The study consists of five chapters. In chapter one we try to demonstrate the need of people to be together in a good society which preserve the law and order. In order to keep people in law and order, the Qur'ān gives its unique suggestion and solution that people must be *mu'addab* (well-behaved). In this connection certain principles of law are introduced.

Chapter two examines the nature of seven *ahruf* in which the Qur'ān was revealed and we come to a conclusion that seven *ahruf* is no more than variant readings of the Qur'ān in a loose sense.

Chapter three deals with the problem of preservation of the Qur'ān in pre-'Uthmānic time as well as its compilation. The compilation were based on the memory of the companions as well as from the written *muṣḥaf* of individuals.

In chapter four we discuss the theory of *naskh* of the Qur'ān. The difficulty to determine abrogated verses has produced a lot of alleged abrogated verses which seem to be different from one scholar to another. As a matter of fact, *naskh* is very important because the contradictory verses

would spoil the completeness and trustworthiness of the Qur'ān and *naskh* is the only way to solve the problem.

In the last chapter, we discuss how the Qur'ān was transmitted generation by generation and the idea of teaching methods which lie in it. Though it was revealed hundreds of years ago its teachings are still dominant and the methods of educating people suggested by it are still applicable.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Dr. John Burton who has supervised this study with constant care and patience. He has spared no time in supporting this research at all stages with his guidance, respect and kind encouragement. In particular I have benefited from him the method to analyse the contradictory materials which I have found scattered everywhere in old Arabic sources.

I would like to thank Mrs. Kuer the Departmental Secretary and to all members of both the Departmental Library and the main library of the University of St. Andrews who have in many ways speeded up the progress of my research especially Miss Rowe of the Inter Library Loan section for her efforts to obtain references from outside.

I should also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Public Services Department of Malaysia which has provided me with financial support, as well as to the International Islamic University which has enabled me to undertake this work.

My acknowledgement would be incomplete without extending my thanks to innumerable friends who have helped me in any way who need not be mentioned here by name.

I am truly indebted to my family who have always been an inexhaustible source of hope throughout my absence from home and my wife Siti Aminah who has constantly encouraged me

during my study and to our children who have been our source of strength.

The last but certainly not least my indebtedness is due to the soul of my deceased father under whose supervision and guidance I committed to love the holy Qur'ān at the earliest stage of my life.

DECLARATIONS

1. I Che Omar b. Haji Awang, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 53,750 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

Date...19.9.1988..... Signature of candidate.....

2. I was admitted as a research student under Ordinance No. 12 in October 1986 and as a candidate for the degree of M. Phil. in October 1986; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St. Andrews between 1986 and 1988.

Date...19.9.1988..... Signature of candidate.....

3. I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolutions and Regulations appropriate for the degree of M. Phil. in the University of St. Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

Date...21/09/88..... Signature of supervisor.....

System of Transliteration.

Consonants

<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Symbol</u>	<u>Arabic</u>	<u>Symbol</u>
ء	'	ز	z	ق	q
ب	b	س	s	ك	k
ت	t	ش	sh	ل	l
ث	th	ص	s	م	m
ج	j	ض	d	ن	n
ح	h	ط	t	ه	h
خ	kh	ظ	z	و	w
د	d	ع	c	ي	y
ذ	dh	غ	gh		
ر	r	ف	f		

Vowels and Diphtongs

Long Vowels

اَ	ā
وُ	ū
يُ	ī

Short Vowels

ا	a
و	u
ي	i

Diphtongs

اَؤْ	aw
اَیْ	ay

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgement.....	iii
Declarations.....	v
System of Transliteration.....	vi
Introduction.....	ix
 Chapter 1	
Law and Revelation.....	1-24
The Arabs before the advent of Islam.....	2
Differences between customary law and Islamic law..	5
Justice in the law.....	11
The roles of the Prophet in Islamic law.....	14
 Chapter 2	
The Revelation of the Qur'ān in Seven <i>Aḥruf</i>.....	25-75
The ḥadīths of seven <i>aḥruf</i>	26
The meaning of seven <i>aḥruf</i> and interpretation.....	33
1. The meaning is unknown.....	35
2. Seven <i>aḥruf</i> represents the symbolic term.....	36
3. Seven <i>aḥruf</i> represents seven item.....	39
4. Ḥadīths of seven <i>aḥruf</i> are fabrications.....	56
 Chapter 3	
The Preservation of the Qur'ān.....	76-113
The pre- ^c Uthmānic preservation.....	77

Uthman collection.....	95
------------------------	----

Chapter 4

<i>Naskh</i> of the Qur'ān.....	114-155
The importance of <i>naskh</i>	115
The meaning of <i>naskh</i>	117
<i>Naskh</i> : origin, modes and significances.....	123
The origin of the theory of <i>naskh</i>	126
Modes of <i>naskh</i>	130
1. Abrogation of the recited verses together with the legal ruling.....	130
2. Abrogation of the recited verses without the legal ruling.....	133
3. Abrogation of the legal ruling without the recited verses.....	144

Chapter 5

The Method of Teaching of and in the Qur'ān.....	156-196
The aims of education.....	157
The methods of teaching the Qur'ān.....	162
The methods of teaching in the Qur'ān.....	174
Conclusion.....	197-204
Works Cited.....	205-215

Introduction

This thesis mainly deals with the revelation of the Qur'ān and its preservation in the time it first saw itself as a religio-legal system wholly regarded as a divine commandment.

The importance of this study lies upon the fact that it deals with the Qur'ān which is the source of *‘aqīdah*, *akhlāq* and *ahkām* to Muslims.

Muslims scholars are of the opinion that the origins of Islamic law are rooted in the Qur'ān, the sunnah of the Prophet, *ijmā‘* and *qiyās*. It is apparent that this view is not wholly accepted by scholars. Some scholars try to establish an idea that by Islamic law it does not mean wholly divined. Islamic law thus consists of primary sources and secondary sources. The former are the Qur'ān and the sunnah of the Prophet and the latter are *ijmā‘*, *qiyās* and others. The primary sources are beyond human attack because they are all divinely inspired. The sunnah enjoyed divine endorsement that makes it authoritative and thus secured from any human alteration.

The law which is stated in the Qur'ān and the sunnah is called *sharī‘ah* whereas the one which is derived from them is known as *fiqh*.

The Qur'ān confirms that any order stated in it was divinely inspired and was conveyed to men by means of

Gabriel through Muhammad. Any explanation of the revelation brought by Muhammad is considered as divinely as the Qur'ān itself because it was approved by the Almighty. Qur'ān al-A'raf(7):157; *wa yuhillu lahum al-ṭayyibāt wa yuharrimu 'alaihim al-khabā'ith wa yada'u 'an hum iṣrahum wa'l-aghlāl al-latī kānat 'alaihim*, speaks about this legislative power of the Prophet.

To Muhammad God had revealed His Holy Book, the Qur'ān, the written law of Islam. However, the way it was revealed becomes a subject of dispute amongst the scholars. Many interpretations thus, are given to the term '*sab'ah ah'ruf*'.

The texts of the Qur'ān had been preserved in two ways; orally and in written form. Muhammad is said to have hired many scribes to record his dictation each of the individual fragments of the revelation immediately after he received it. His other companions are said to have memorized the texts, for the Prophet had encouraged them to do so.

The idea of who was the first compiler of the fragments of the revelation has been a subject of discussion among the scholars. Muslim scholars believe that the texts were compiled after the death of the Prophet; in the time of Abū Bakr and later compilation of 'Uthmān which dominated the centres of Islamic territories. The *maṣāḥif* of 'Uthmān becomes the sole authority of the texts of the Qur'ān to represent the received texts without alteration. Personal codices were ordered to be abandoned and thus they disappeared and ceased to exist.

The problem of *naskh* of the texts of the revelation becomes a very important subject in studying the Qur'ān. It is very closely related to the problem of the preservation. The question whether the Qur'ān is complete or not depends upon it. The moment the *naskh* is rejected, the difficulty for the scholars appears. On the other hand, if *naskh* is accepted, disputes among the scholars arise. Nevertheless, the difficulty does not deny the existence of *naskh* in the Qur'ān.

Finally we see the texts of the Qur'ān have certain roles in educating people. Most of the verses are speaking about moulding a good society by means of good characters. Thus, most of the verses are focused on this matter, to *ta'dīb* (educate) people from the very beginning of their life.

In this study we have relied upon certain principle sources. The most basic are: Shāfi'ī's *Risālah*, Tabarī's *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āiy al-Qur'ān*, ibn Abū Dāwud's *Kitāb al-Masāhif*, ibn Bārizī's *Nāsikh al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm wa Mansūkhih*, Hibat Allāh's *al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh*, al-Hamadhānī's *Kitāb al-Iʿtibār*, ibn Kathīr's *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm*, Qurtubī's *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān*, ibn Qutaibah's *Ta'wīl*, Rāzī's *Tafsīr*, ibn Jazari's *al-Nashr*, Zarkashī's *Burhān*, and Suyūṭī's *Itqān*.

In the field of ḥadīth, we have mainly benefited from *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Fath al-Bārī*, and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ Nawawī*.

Modern books have also been consulted such as Zurqānī's *Manāhil*, Subhī's *Mabāhith*, Hammūdah's *al-Qirā'āt*, Shāhīn's *Tārīkh al-Qur'ān* and Daraz's *al-Naba' al-^cAzīm*.

Use of books written in English has also been made and we have benefited from Muir's *Life of Mahomet*, Jeffery's *Materials*, Bucaille's *The Bible, The Qur'ān and Science* and finally Burton's writings; *The collection, High Flying Cranes*, Abū^c Ubaid's *K. al-Nāsikh* and his Ph. D. thesis.

Although many books were consulted, reference has been made only to those cited.

Unlike the normal practice of mentioning Arabic names preceded by the definite article 'al', I have followed Burton's style of dropping it. For instance, al-Shāfi'ī will be cited as Shāfi'ī, al-Ṭabarī as Ṭabarī, al-Suyūṭī as Suyūṭī and so on except when citing full names such as Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, the article is retained. This method is applied also to the titles of the books cited in the footnotes. In footnotes, certain references are cited in shortened forms. For example, *Jāmi^c al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āiy al-Qur'ān* is cited as *Jāmi^c*, *al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh* as *Nāsikh Mansūkh* and so on. However, these shortened forms are cited together with their authors to avoid confusion.

Chapter 1

Law and Revelation

Law and Revelation.

The Arabs before the advent of Islam.

There are two main things to be mentioned here regarding the Arabs before the emergence of the Prophet Muhammad. Firstly, their daily lives were based on norms which seemed to be acceptable in the eyes of their leaders and secondly, about their belief.

Their wealth came from various means. Some of them were merchants and some were shepherds.

The Arabs lived in many tribes which provided their security. They really observed their customs and norms. Many of them were nomad tribes.¹ Each of the tribes had a leader called *shaikh*.² They were not (used to be) under one king and there was no systematic and well-organized government.³ This situation might frequently lead them into wars amongst the tribes. They had a natural disposition to war, bloodshed, cruelty and rapine.⁴

Though many of the Arabs were nomadic, some of them had made certain places their bases. The most famous centres were Makkah, Madīnah and Ṭā'if. Many of their inhabitants were merchants, having trade with people in Syria and they made their journeys in caravan.

Profit was the only aim of their transactions. Thus, usury was wide spread as pictured by the Qur'ān.⁵ Justice

among them was what their *shaikhs* believed and what the people accepted as norms. For certain tribes, robbery was considered valuable. Robberies were very frequently committed by these people on merchants and travellers.⁶

As the Arabs had their defects and vices, also they had their excellences. They valued themselves chiefly on:⁷

1. Eloquence, and perfect skill in their own tongue.
2. Expertness in the use of arms and horsemanship.
3. Hospitality.
4. Faithfulness to their word.
5. Respect to their kindred.

They were very honest among themselves or towards those whom they received as friends. To a certain extent every thing in their camps was open and nothing was ever known to be stolen.⁸

As regards their religion, the Arabs were idolaters.⁹ They worshipped a great numbers of idols. It was reported that there were no less than three hundred and sixty idols,¹⁰ in and about the Ka⁶bah at Makkah. "Every housekeeper had his household god or gods, which he last took leave of and first saluted at his going abroad and returning home".¹¹ Some of these idols were named such as Hobal, Asaf and Nailah. W. Muir makes some remarks on this matter; he says:

"The prospects of Arabia before the rise
of Mahomet were as unfavourable to

religious reform as to political or national regeneration. The foundation of Arab faith was a deep-rooted idolatry, which for centuries had stood proof, with no palpable symptom of decay, against every attempt at evangelisation from Egypt and Syria. Several causes increased the insensibility of Arabia to the Gospel".¹²

They had not been influenced either by Jewish or Christian teaching except a few of them in Shām and Irāq.¹³ They were not interested in the religions as they gained not much benefit from them. Some Jews and Christians when in power caused terrible persecutions on their people who might go against them.¹⁴ Even the Christians and the Jews were frequently in dispute.¹⁵ Moreover the Arabs and Arabia before Islam were unknown to the outer world. The Arabs themselves had but little knowledge of anything beyond their own deserts.¹⁶

The best picture of the Arabs before Islam might well be illustrated in a passage attributed to Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, the spokesman of the Muslim emigrants in Abyssinia, to the King Negus (Najāshi):

"Jāhiliyah people we are, worshipping idols, feeding on dead animals, practising immorality, deserting our

families and violating the covenant terms of mutual protection, with the strong among us devouring the weak".¹⁷

It was into this society and environment that Allah sent his messenger Muhammad to turn them away from being idolaters to monotheists, which seemed to be an almost impossible task to W. Muir.

Differences between customary law and Islamic law.

The main purpose of any law is to make people live within a good society in harmony and to make possible lives wherein justice is well observed and established.

In general, we could say that there are two categories of law running in our societies which people believe in. The first, man-made law and the other, divine law.

The man-made law reflects the values in a society within which the law was initiated and originated. This type of law is represented by almost all countries in the world nowadays. The law could be and would be changed with the change of values, as viewed by such a society. Religion has not been taken into consideration in formulating the law because modern legal institutions have achieved complete separation of church and state and therefore, in man-made law, the yardstick according to which the unlawful or immoral character of an act is to be measured, is the public

interest and the morals of the community looked at from a purely human angle.¹⁸

The man-made laws, by whatever name they may be called were founded on customs long observed and sanctioned by the consent of the people.¹⁹ As regards civil law ²⁰ and common law ²¹, both are products of western civilization.²²

The basic focus of this law is human conflict ²³ and human experience.²⁴

The term 'law' in this respect is a subject of dispute as to its definition. Legal scholars from the very early time until the modern days disagreed in defining it. C.Gordon Post, has brought together several examples of definitions of this term held by legal scholars.²⁵

As regards Islam, it has its own law. It is called Islamic law (*Sharī'ah Islāmiyah*). Many definitions have been given of this particular law. Almost all Islamic scholars refer in their discussions on Islamic law to either '*Sharī'ah*' or '*Fiqh*'.

Some of them treated these two terms as synonymous, designating the body of rules constituting Islamic law ²⁶ whereas some others make them different.²⁷ They have come out with different decisions because they have focused on Islamic law from various aspects.

In fact, whether the terms *sharī'ah* and *fiqh* are different or synonymous has become a subject of dispute among Islamic scholars.

Sharī'ah, an Arabic word, originally referred to a watering place, a resort of drinkers, both men and beasts.³⁰ As a term, it signifies likewise *al-Dīn*, because it is a way to eternal life. It is the religious law of God.³¹ It is Allah's order about the way of life.³² It is the way that leads the righteous believer to Paradise in the afterlife.³¹ It is the canon law of Islam, the totality of Allah's commandments.³²

Fiqh literally means knowledge, understanding, intelligence or learning.³³ It is applied to any branch of knowledge. As a term, *fiqh* referred to the interpretations of the requirements of the *sharī'ah* or the science of interpreting the *sharī'ah*³⁴ or the science of the *sharī'ah*, the science of religious law in Islam³⁵ or the *sharī'ah*.³⁶

Before we go further in the discussion it would be very helpful if we could look into the very root of the source of Islamic law, the Qur'ān.³⁷

In Qur'ān 45:18, we read:

And now have We set thee (O Muhammad) on
a clear road of (Our) commandment; so
follow it, and follow not the whims of
those who know not.

In another verse, Qur'ān 6:65, we read:

Say: He is able to send punishment upon you from above you or from beneath your feet, or to bewilder you with dissension and make you taste the tyranny one of another. See how We display the revelations so that they may understand.

Ṭabarī has defined the term *sharī'ah* as God's way or God's manner of action.³⁸ Ibn Kathīr held that *sharī'ah* is anything that was revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad from his God.³⁹

On Qur'ān 6:65, Ṭabarī holds that '*yafqahūn*' (the verbal noun is *fiqh*) means so that they understand the thing and take it into account.⁴⁰ Ibn Kathīr believes that the root '*fiqh*' here brings the meaning 'understanding' and 'ability to reflect on the result of God's signs'.⁴¹

In conjunction with this, there is another verse, Qur'ān 7:179 which reads:

Already have We urged into hell many of the jinn and humankind, having hearts wherewith they understand not, and having eyes wherewith they see not, and having ears wherewith they hear not. These are as the cattle-nay, but they are worse! These are the neglectful.

According to Ṭabarī, the word '*lā yafqahūn*' here means that these people do not think and ponder over Allah's signs and they do not reflect on the results.⁴² Ibn Kathīr says that they do not make use of their strength to seek God's guidance.⁴³

It is explicitly stated in Qur'an 45:18 that, *sharī'ah* is something put forward by God . It is He who is the lawgiver. His ought to be the only law and it is the duty of the Prophet to follow it and to submit himself to God's injunctions in their entirety.

The Prophet was bound by God's will and in no way free to create his own law. However, he was empowered by God to elucidate His law by word and deed. In this case, the Prophet's words or actions were binding not because he was the lawgiver but because he was delegated a power to explain revelations conveyed to him by his God. Therefore, it was recorded that sometimes he was doing wrong in his words and deeds but was corrected by God. This could be seen for example in Qur'ān 8:67-68 and 9:43.

Qur'ān 8 reads:

"It is not for any Prophet to have captives until he hath made slaughter in the land. Ye desire the lure of this world and Allah desireth (for you) the hereafter, and Allah is Mighty, Wise.

Had it not been for an ordinance of Allah which had gone before, an awful doom had come upon you on account of what ye took."

In Qur'ān 9 we read:

"Allah forgive thee (O Muhammad)! Wherefore didst thou grant them leave ere those who told the truth were manifest to thee and thou didst know the liars?"

If Muḥammad was supposed to create his own law there would not be any correction immediately after the first decision had been implemented. Humans would not do this ⁴⁴ unless after certain discussions and perceptions.

Hence, the Prophet's words or actions were binding, although not as the lawgiver and it is the task of the people to obey the Prophet on this basis.

Based on Qur'ān 6:65 and 7:179 regarding *fiqh*, there are suggestions that people might and should use their own sense or ability to understand and reflect on God's revelation and signs and make their own conclusions.

Thus, we can conclude here with these remarks:

1. Ordinary law is man-made whereas Islamic law is either divine revelation or derived on the basis of revelation.
2. Ordinary law deals only with worldly affairs whereas Islamic law is both worldly and eternal.

3. Disobedience of Islamic law is regarded as a sin and constitutes an offence against God.⁴⁵ This is not applicable in the ordinary law.
4. There is no separation between the law and religion in Islam but there is a complete separation between them in modern legal institutions.⁴⁶
5. *Shari'ah* is from God (Qur'ān) or by His consent (*sunnah of the Prophet*) whereas *fiqh* is the result of human decision based on *shari'ah*.
6. *Shari'ah* is everlasting and enduring whereas *fiqh* is subject to dispute and alteration.
7. Muslims believe that *shari'ah* contains the truth whereas *fiqh* contains probabilities.⁴⁷
8. *Shari'ah* is the principle whereas *fiqh* is the derivative.

In other words, we can say that, modern legal institutions are initiated by humans and meant for them whereas Islamic law is either from the commandment of God or its interpretation by means of analogical deductions and other processes used by human beings.

Justice in the law.

Justice is the most basic element of any law, without which the law would not be respected or accepted by the people.

In man-made law, justice consists not in reaching a correct decision, but in giving a full and fair hearing to both sides by acting impartially and by making an honest attempt to reach a just decision.⁴⁸ Therefore Justice is relative in several different ways.⁴⁹ It depends on time and space. There is no definitive answer for this question. Justice in the fourteenth century is different from the twentieth century and justice in Scotland is different from that prevalent in South Africa today.

Justice must be differentiated from the law. The system of law is what the law provides in it. The implementation of the law will ascertain whether the law is just or not.

Generally speaking, justice consists of good laws, good judges and good court systems. However, the most important aspect of justice is the judges because the system of law is implemented by them.⁵⁰ On them justice depends. No wonder Post believes that,

"more crucial, however, for justice, are the judges: no matter how excellent a court system may be on paper, no matter how good it may be philosophically, it will never be any better than the men who administer it."⁵¹

We see here, that justice is reliant upon the 'human-factor'. To do justice means that a system has to produce just judges. Hence, the quality of the judges must be high.

Otherwise, there will be much judicial corruption because this man-made law relies solely on man. Even good judges can only do their human best and reach just decisions to the best of their abilities.⁵³

Therefore, many attempts have been made to secure justice. Apart from a good law, the English stress honest judgement between conflicting claims⁵³ and separation between the judiciary and the executive, so that one may not influence the other, especially the executive who are endowed with powers of making law in parliament today.⁵⁴

With honest and independent judges, the judges will hopefully exercise their power without fear and favour,⁵⁵ holding the scale evenly, not only between man and man, but also between man and the state.

In man made law, justice is thus, not reaching a correct decision but 'the product of the process of balancing, the balancing of conflicting interests'.⁵⁶

The concept of justice in the Islamic legal system is referred to by two words used in the Qur'ān namely; *al-qist*⁵⁷ and *al-ʿadl*⁵⁸.

Justice is one of Allah's attributes, and to stand firm for justice is to be a witness to Allah, although it may be detrimental to our own interests, as we conceive them.

Justice in the Islamic legal system therefore, consists of the Qur'ānic injunctions which command Muslims to be just in their deeds. In Islam, justice is not only present in legal matters but also in all fields of daily life. Justice

is actually putting something in its correct place. Thus, it includes all the virtues of good behaviour. Islam even asks for something warmer and more human, where perhaps it is not strictly demanded by justice; such as returning good for ill or obliging those who have no claim on anyone.

In the *sharī'ah*, Allah is the lawgiver and the nation of Islam (*ummah*), is His trustee. Because of this principle, they enjoy a derivative rule-making power but not an absolute law-creating prerogative. Therefore, every Muslim who is capable of interpreting the *sharī'ah* is entitled to do so whenever necessary within the spirit of Islamic law with solemn intent and must not go beyond the limits which are explicitly commanded by Allah or His Prophet. Those who go beyond the limits will be regarded as sinners and will therefore be punished.

Justice searches out the innermost motives, because Muslims are to act as if in the presence of their God.⁶⁰

The roles of the Prophet in Islamic law.

As I have mentioned before, Islamic law is either *sharī'ah* or its derivative (*fiqh*). Therefore, the Prophet's role in this matter is inevitable.

Islam views only Almighty Allah as having absolute legislative power and it is His absolute authority to lay down what is lawful and unlawful. He is the only one to fix values for human beings. His sanctions are final and

immutable. No one is exempted from His injunctions. Even the Prophet who was considered His agent on earth and through whom His revelations were taught and spread was subject to His order. Further the Prophet had no right to alter God's commands of his own accord.

In carrying out his duty as a messenger, the Prophet was delegated a power by his Lord and authorized to teach Islam to the people. His roles in the legal aspect ⁶¹ could be summarized as follows:

1. The elucidator of revelations. ⁶²

The Prophet was empowered to explain in his own words and actions all *āyāt* ⁶³ which had been revealed to him. His explanations are considered part and parcel of his traditions, the second source in the Islamic legal system. ⁶⁴ The Qur'ān has explicitly stated that *inter alia* his task is to explain to people what was revealed to him. ⁶⁵ For example, the obligation of pilgrimage is stated in the Qur'ān but the way to go about it was demonstrated only by the Prophet and the Qur'ān has no details about it.

2. The legislator.

The Prophet was empowered to originate and initiate rules and regulations other than what had been revealed to him. ⁶⁶ However, he exercised this power within due limits. Any regulation given by him was subject to alteration or cancellation from his Lord immediately after his decision was made. There are many cases recorded by either historians

or theologians where the Prophet's decisions have been revoked by his God.⁶⁷

Muslims from all walks of life are therefore, enjoined to abide by the Prophet's decisions as they do by the Qur'an.⁶⁸ Should their capable scholars find no rules within these two main sources or there are any ambiguities, they are allowed to employ their opinions according to the spirit of the Qur'an and the Prophet's traditions.

In conclusion, we could say that:

1. Man-made law was founded and initiated to solve human conflicts. Their interests are looked at absolutely from the human angle. Therefore, justice in man-made law is relative. It is different from time to time and from one place to another.

2. Religion has not been taken into account because the law falls outside the sphere of religion where it is considered to be a state matter and religion a church matter.

3. In the Islamic point of view the law is regarded as an integral part of Islam.⁶⁹ No aspect of behaviour was not intended to be covered by the revealed law.

4. It is God's order that the Prophet's whole tradition; life, decisions, judgements and commands should be authoritative and have a legal force ⁷⁰ because he has been guided from going astray.⁷¹

Footnotes

Chapter One

1. William Muir, *The life of Mahomet* (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1878), p. vi.
2. *ibid.* p. vi.
3. *ibid.* p. vi. Abstract from the discussion under the title 'subdivision and independence of Arab tribes a formidable obstacle to union'.
4. E.M. Wherry, *A Comprehensive Commentary on The Qur'ān*, (London: Trubner & Co., 1882), 1:56-57.
5. Qur'ān 2:275, 4:161. See also Saba Habachy, "The System of Nullities in Muslim Law", *AJCL* 13 (1964), 65.
6. Wherry, *The Qur'ān*, p. 57.
7. *ibid.* pp. 51 and 56. The explanation of these excellences were given by Wherry on pp. 52-56.
8. *ibid.*, p. 58.
9. Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtidā' al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm*, ed. Faqiy (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, n.d.), p. 2.
Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Zanjānī, *Tārīkh al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Muassasah al-A'lamī li'l-Maṭbū'āt, 1969), p. 19.
10. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, K. al-Jihād wa'l-Sair, bāb fath Makkah.
11. Wherry, *The Qur'ān*, p. 42.
12. Muir, *Life of Mohamet*, p. vii.
13. Zanjānī, *Tārīkh Qur'ān*, p. 19.
14. Wherry, *The Qur'ān*, p. 45. See also the story of *aṣḥāb al-ukhdūd*, Qur'ān 85:4-5. Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah al-Nabiy*,

ed. Muhy al-Dīn 'Abd al-Hamīd (Dār al-Fikr, 1981),
1:35-36.

15. Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah*, p. 35.
16. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. v.
17. Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah*, 1:358-359. Philip K. Hitti in his book, *History of The Arabs* (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1951), p. 121, believes that this saying was an apocryphal word put in the mouth of Ja'far b. Abu Talib.
18. Saba Habachy, "Nullities in Muslim law", 13:65.
19. Mackenzie, *Studies in Roman law* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1862), p. 10. See also Von Mehren and Gordley, *The Civil Law System*, 2nd edit. (Boston: Little Brown, 1977), p. 4.
20. The civil law is a law where a large area of private law is codified and it was strongly and variously influenced by Roman law. For example, the French and German law. See Von Mehren and Gordley, *Civil law system*, p. 3.
21. In the common law, the codification of private law is not typical and the Roman influence on it was far less profound and in no way pervasive. For example, English law. See Von Mehren and Gordley, *Civil law system*, p. 3.
22. Mackenzie, *Studies in Roman law*, p. 10.
23. Problems are caused by people. They have their own rights in legislative, executive and judiciary matters. The moment they would not give up some of these rights, the

- problem starts. See C. Gordon Post, *An introduction to the law* (N.J.: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 6.
24. The man-made law uses human experiences to solve any conflict between two parties. The agent for peaceful settlement is the courts. See C. Gordon Post, *Introduction to the law*, p. 7.
25. *ibid.* He quotes some views of the legal scholars and lawyers as follows: Charles Evans Hughes, later Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, declared that "We are under a constitution, but the constitution is what the judges say it is..." Mr. Justice Holmes believed that "The prophecies of what the courts will do in fact, and nothing more pretentious, are what I mean by law". And Karl Llewellyn held that "What these officials [judges, sheriffs, clerks, jailors, or lawyers] do about disputes is, to my mind the law itself."
26. The Encyclopedia of Religion, vol. 7, 1987, p. 431.
27. See the different meanings of these terms in The Encyclopaedia of Islam, vol. iv, 1924, p. 320 and vol. ii, 1965, p. 886.
28. E. W. Lane, *Arabic English Lexicon* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1863), Book 1 pt. iv, p. 1535.
See also Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Bulaq, 1307), v. 9, p. 41. He refers to a place where only animals drink water.
29. E. W. Lane, *Arabic English Lexicon*, p. 1535.

30. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, p. 41.
31. The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 431.
32. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1924, p. 320.
33. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1965, p. 886. See also The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 431, and al-Farāʾid al-Durriyyah.
34. The Encyclopedia of Religion, p. 431. See also Dr. John Burton, *The Collection of the Qurʾān* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 3.
35. The Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1924, p.320 and 1965, p. 886.
36. Sayyid Sābiq, *Fiqh al-Sunnah*, (Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabiyy, 1971), p.10. He uses the term *al-tashrīʿ* instead of *al-sharīʿah*.
37. All translations refer to Muḥammad Marmaduke Pickthall *The meaning of the Glorious Koran* (London: Dār al-Shoura, n.d.)
38. Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān ʿan taʾwīl āiy al-Qurʾān* (Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1954), 25:146.
39. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAzīm*, (Cairo: ʿIsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī), 4:149.
40. Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān*, 7:226-227
41. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 2:143.
42. Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-Bayān*, 9:131-132.
43. Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 2:268.
44. Darāz, Muḥammad ʿAbd Allah, *al-Nabaʿ al-ʿAzīm* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿah al-Saʿādah, 1969), p. 18.

45. Habachy, "Nullities in Muslim law", 13:65.
46. *ibid*, p. 65.
47. Ibn al-Jazarī, *al-Nashr fi'l qirā-āt al-ʿashr*
(Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, n.d.), 1:52.
48. R. H. Graveson, "The Scales of Justice", in *Law, Justice and Equity*, ed. R. H. Code Holland and
G. Schwarzenberger (London: Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons
Ltd., 1967), p. 6.
49. *ibid.*, p. 1.
50. "Judges" here includes all the magistrates and others
who exercise judicial functions such as the chairmen of
tribunals when they are independent of the executive
power. Alfred Denning, *The Changing Law* (London:
Stevens and Sons Ltd., 1953), p. 4.
51. Post, *Law*, p. 13.
52. Graveson, "Scales of Justice", p. 6
53. *ibid.*, p. 2.
54. Denning, *Changing Law*, pp. 4 & 6.
55. *ibid.*, p. 5. Graveson, "Scales of Justice", p. 2.
56. Graveson "Scales of Justice", p. 7.
57. Qur'ān, *Ḥadīd* (57):25, *A'rāf* (7):29.
58. Qur'ān, *Nisā'* (4):58, *Nahl* (16):90.
59. Qur'ān, *Nisā'* (4):105.
60. Muslim, *Kitāb al-Īmān*. Injustice is not only illegal,
but it is also a sin because it is looked at from the
angle of revealed law of God. Habachy, "Nullities in
Muslim Law", p. 61. see note 18 above.

61. Some especially western scholars, hold that Muhammad's mission is a religious matter. He was a religious reformer. He dealt with no legal matter since law fell outside the sphere of religion. His authority was not legal but, for the believers, religious and, for the lukeworm, political. His aim as a prophet was not to create a new system of law; it was to teach men how to act, what to do, and what to avoid in order to pass the reckoning on the Day of Judgement and to enter Paradise. Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), passim, pp. 10-19.

C. Snouck Hurgronje expresses the similar opinion in his book, *Mohammedanism* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916), p. 60, that Muhammad was not qualified to undertake legislative work.

However, their argument is refuted by J. N. D. Anderson in his work, "The Significance of Islamic Law in the world today", *AJCL* 9 (1960), 187. He says "To the pious Muslim, all down the ages, life has been dominated by the twin sciences of theology and law. Theology prescribes all that he must believe, while the law comprises all that he must do or leave undone."

This means "to teach men what to do, and what to avoid" is what so called law. N. J. Coulson, in his book, *A History of Islamic Law* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 1964), p. 12, believes that al-Qur'ān has

- approximately eighty verses dealing with legal topics in the strict sense of the term and about six hundred verses on religious duties. On p. 64, he emphasized that the Prophet had his own supreme political and legal authority in Medina. Another scholar, S. V. FitzGerald, in his article "The Alleged Debt of Islamic to Roman Law", *The Law Quarterly Review* 67(1951), 102, holds that *sharī'ah* is a system of law which is overshadowed by the religious. Hence we could conclude that Muḥammad had played his legal role to administer his society (government). It might be misunderstood by those who adhere to the concept of the "complete separation between church and state", that Islamic law is in the same state, since Muḥammad had frequently and obviously instigated his followers to moral obligations.
62. Coulson, *History of Islamic Law*, p. 22. He gives an example of the Prophet's role in the matter of inheritance.
 63. *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, 10(1918), 539, states that *āyah* (plural *āy* or *āyāt*), often used for 'sign' or 'miracle' is identical with the Hebrew word *oth*. The writer does not mention another meaning of the word *āyah*, that is sentence or verse.
 64. Anderson, "Significance of Islamic Law", p. 188.
 65. Qur'ān, *Nahl* (16):44.
 66. Qur'ān, *Nūr* (24):51. *Aḥzāb* (33):36. *A'rāf* (7):157.
 67. He had made his own decision on the captives of

Badr war. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *Uyūn al-Athar*, 2 vols.
(Beirut: Dār al-Āfaq al-Jadīdah, 1982), 1, 343.

However, his decision had been revoked by God in
Anfāl (8):67.

68. Qur'ān, *Nisā'* (4):59. See Muḥammad b. Idrīs
al-Shāfi'ī, *al-Risālah* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī
al-Ḥalabī, 1940), p. 78. Ibn Tallā', *Aqḍīyah*
Rasūl Allah, ed. Muḥammad Diyā' al-Raḥmān al-'Azamī
(Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Lubnānī, 1982), p. 27.

The Prophet was very pleased when Mu'ādh b. Jabal
expressed his opinion to follow the Qur'ān, or in its
absence, the Prophet's traditions, or in its absence,
to use his *ijtihād*.

69. Habachy, "Nullities in Muslim Law", p. 65.

70. Qur'ān, *Nisā'* (4):65.

71. Shāfi'ī, *al-Risālah*, p. 87.

Chapter 2

The Revelation of the Qur'ân in seven *ahruf*

The Revelation of the Qur'ān in Seven *Ahruf*.

The ḥadīths of seven *ahruf*.

The idea that the Qur'ān is allowed to be read in many ways or modes has been dominant in the Muslims' view since the earliest time. Many ḥadīths¹ have been offered to support this idea. Amongst them, four are narrated by Muslim² and two by Bukhārī³. Another scholar, Ṭabarī, an exegete has collected some thirty four ḥadīths concerning this matter⁴.

It is worthwhile to bring in at this juncture certain ḥadīths regarding this matter, with some comments, for the purpose of the discussion later.

1. Ibn 'Abbās reported that:

"Allāh's Apostle peace be upon him said; Gabriel recited the Qur'ān to me in one *ḥarf*. Then I requested him (to read it in another *ḥarf*) and continued asking him to recite it in other *ahruf* and he recited it in several *ahruf* till he ultimately recited it in seven *ahruf*"⁵.

2. 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb narrated ; "I heard Hishām ibn Hukaim reciting *sūrah al-Furqān* during the lifetime of Allah's

Apostle and I listened to his recitation and noticed that he recited in several different ways which Allāh's Apostle had not taught me. I was about to jump upon him during his prayer ,but I controlled my temper, and when he had completed his prayer, I put his upper garment around his neck and seized him by it and said, "Who taught you this *sūrah* which I heard you reciting?" He replied, "Allāh's Apostle taught it to me." I said, "You have told a lie, for Allāh's Apostle has taught it to me in a different way from yours." So I dragged him to Allāh's Apostle and said(to Allāh's Apostle), "I heard this person reciting *sūrah al-Furqān* in a way which you haven't taught me!" On that Allāh's Apostle said, "Release him, (Umar)! Recite, Hishām!" Then he recited in the same way as I heard him reciting. Then Allāh's Apostle said, " It was revealed in this way," and added, "Recite, Umar!" I recited as he taught me. Allāh's Apostle then said, " It was revealed in this way. This Qur'ān has been revealed to be recited in

seven *ahruf*, so recite of it whichever is easier for you ۞.

3. Ubai said:

"When I was in the mosque, a man entered to pray and he read a reading which I disagreed upon. Another got in and read a reading other than that of his companion. When we finished the prayer, we went in a body to the Prophet. I said : this man reads a reading which I disagreed upon. Another man came and read a reading other than that of his companion. The Prophet ordered them both and they read. He approved their readings. Disbelief then fell into my mind and not such as when I was in the days of ignorance. When the Prophet saw what troubled me , he gave me a pat on my chest and then I was perspiring and (then) I was as if I were looking towards Allāh with a faint heart. He addressed me : Ubai! I was given to read the Qur'ān in one *ḥarf*. I returned to Him to say: Make it easy for my followers. It was then said to me for the second time: read(it) in two *ahruf*. I returned to Him to say: Make it easy for my followers. It was then said to me for

the third time: Read in seven *ahruf*, and you have got a request for every time that I sent you back, which you should seek from Me. I said: Allāh! forgive my followers, Allāh! forgive my followers. I have retained the third for a day on which the entire creation will turn to me, including even Ibrāhīm."⁷

4. In another ḥadīth reported by Ubai, "the Apostle of Allāh met Gabriel at Ahjār al-Mirā' where upon he asked: Gabriel! I have been sent to an illiterate people amongst whom there are boys, girls and old, women and men. Gabriel said: Ask them to read Qur'ān in seven *ahruf*".⁸

5. In another ḥadīth reported by Ubai, he said:

"Allāh's Apostle had been at Adāh Banū Ghifār when Gabriel came to him and said: "Allāh has commanded you to recite to your people the Qur'ān in one *harf*." Upon this Muḥammad said: I ask from Allah pardon and forgiveness. My people are not capable of doing it." He then came for the second time and said: "Allāh has commanded you that you should recite the Qur'ān to your people in two *ahruf*." Upon

this the Prophet again said: " I seek pardon and forgiveness from Allāh, my people would not be able to do so." He (Gabriel) came for the third time and said: " Allāh has commanded you to recite the Qur'ān to your people in three *ahruf*." Upon this he said: "I ask pardon and forgiveness from Allāh. My people would not be able to do it." He then came to him for the fourth time and said: "Allāh has commanded you to recite the Qur'ān to your people in seven *ahruf* and whichever they would recite, they would be right."

Many things are apparent from these *ḥadīths*. Among other things :

1. These *ḥadīths* came into existence due to certain causes:

1.1. Disputes have taken place amongst the Prophet's companions. When they seek counsel from the Prophet, they were told these *ḥadīths*.

1.2. The Prophet was told these *ḥadīths* by Gabriel during their discussions and he later told his companions.

1.3. Teachings from the Prophet, as he make statements about these *ḥadīths*.

2. The Prophet's companions are said to have practised many ways of recitation to the extent that there arose accusations against each other of having falsified or not recited according to the correct way as taught by the Prophet.

In the second ḥadīth it was reported that ʿUmar disagreed with Hishām's recitation and accused him of reciting the Qur'ān in the wrong way.

The same thing happened between Ubai and the two companions, as described by the third ḥadīth.

3. These ḥadīths do not indicate what were the exact words disputed by the companions. In the ḥadīth with ʿUmar, it is stated that the matter disagreed upon was the recitation of the *sūrah al-Furqān*. Neither a definite āyah nor the precise way of recitation was mentioned. In the case of Ubai it is stated that they were quarrelling over a certain *qirā'ah* from a certain āyah of the Qur'ān.

However, when they sought counsel from the Prophet, they were told that each and everyone had a correct reading, because the Qur'ān had been revealed to be recited in seven *ahruf*. They were then advised to read according to the way they felt easier, so long as the recitations were within the seven *ahruf*. On this basis Ibn Jazarī believes that the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf* is to make the recitation easy for reciters.¹⁰

4. The permission to recite the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf* was given after the migration (*hijrah*) because *inter alia*

the places related to this permission were Ahjār al-Mirā' and Adāh Banū Ghifār. Ahjār al-Mirā' is a place near Qubā' in the outskirts of Madīnah,¹¹ whereas Adāh Banū Ghifār is a place which has a pool and is near Madīnah as well.¹² It was named after Banū Ghifār because it was this tribe which occupied and governed this area. It is more obvious, if we refer to the ḥadīth narrated by Ubai, that he had listened to the different recitation of the two men in the Mosque. The Muslims had built their mosque only after the *hijrah* (i.e. in Qubā' and Madīnah). In the case of Masjid al-Harām¹³ they occupied it after the *hijrah*.

Nevertheless, there is one thing to be questioned here regarding *sūrah al-Furqān* which was the pivot of dispute between 'Umar and Hishām. This permission might have been given before the *hijrah* because this *sūrah* was revealed in Mecca before the *hijrah*.¹⁴ However, this does not invalidate the proposition because Hishām was converted in the year of *al-fath*.¹⁵ This was about eight years after the *hijrah*. As regards the recitation of *sūrah al-furqān* there is nothing to be questioned because the permission was not confined to revelations after *hijrah* only but was generalised to all *āyāt* in the Qur'ān.

Suyūṭī says the number of narrators of the ḥadīths has reached twenty one¹⁶ persons from amongst the companions, where upon Abū 'Ubaid al-Qāsim b. Sallām considered these ḥadīths as *mutawātir*.¹⁷

Should any disagreement or dispute occur during the time of the Prophet, the parties referred these to him. Hence, there were no prolonged quarrels amongst the companions. Moreover the Prophet forbade them from being involved in disputes by considering them as *kufr*¹⁰.

The main issue here is the exact definition of seven *ahruf* offered by the *hadīths*. No one from amongst the companions gave the meaning of this term. Neither ^cUmar nor Ubai expounded what were the explicit words they disputed over. No wonder then that we see the different interpretations of seven *ahruf* come into existence and the scholars are still looking for the exact interpretation.

Hence, we can make an interim conclusion that these *hadīths* justify the existence of different recitations of the Qur'ān amongst the companions although the precise words disputed over were not mentioned.

The meaning of seven *ahruf* and interpretation.

The word *harf* in Arabic has three plural forms, *hiraḥ*, *hurūf* and *ahruf*. Due to this, Arabic lexicons have given several meanings of this word.

However, not all meanings given are applicable in the course of our study. What are related to us is that, *harf* (pl. *ahruf*) means a mode, a manner and a way ¹¹, or a dialect, an idiom, or a mode of expression, peculiar to certain of the Arabs.¹² Ibn Manẓūr says any one word in the Qur'ān which is read in several modes is called *harf*, for

example, this is *ḥarf* Ibn Mas'ūd when someone read according to his manner of recitation.²¹

There are many discussions by scholars to clarify the exact meaning of seven *ahruf* described in the *ḥadīths* mentioned before. Each and everyone tries to elucidate this mysterious word employing all facts, skills and abilities they have, to find out what they feel correct and true. It is very certain that their achievements are various because their knowledge and skills fluctuated and their environments were different. No wonder they come out with various views and suggestions in defining this term.

It might be worthwhile to study the meaning of seven *ahruf* in the light of the discussions rendered by the scholars from the earliest time.

We can group them into four main categories as follows:

1. Those who believe that the meaning of seven *ahruf* is unknown.²²

2. Those who hold that this seven *ahruf* is a symbolic term intended for plurality. It is not intended for an exact numerical meaning.²³

3. Those who adhere to the idea that this seven *ahruf* is meant for the precise meaning of the number seven that follows number six and precedes eight. Therefore, seven

ahruf brings them to many interpretations within seven items.

4. Those who believe that the *ḥadīths* are not successive (*mutawātir*) but merely fabrications of scholars.

1. The meaning is unknown.

1. No one knows the exact meaning of seven *ahruf*. This opinion is said to be initiated by Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad b. Saʿdān al-Nahwiyy.²⁴ He says that this is certain because the word *ḥarf* denotes many meanings such as a letter of the alphabet, a word, a meaning, or a way.²⁵

In concurrence with this idea is the view given by Ibn al-ʿArabī. He has not rendered any specific comment on this term. He could not come up with any suggestion, because there are no clues from either the Qurʾān or the *ahādīth*²⁶ which can be relied on, in giving the correct interpretation. He treats this term as if it cannot be known with certainty.

However, this view has been rejected by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Zurqānī.²⁷ He opposes this view on the ground that any word can be determined as to its meaning according to the context. For example, if someone says " *nazartu bi'l-ʿaīn al-mujarradah*" and " *sharibtu min ʿaīn Zubaīdah*". Their meanings are clear without any ambiguity, even though the word "ʿaīn" has more than one meaning. In the first sentence, it is clear that the word "ʿaīn" is referred to the human

sense and in the second sentence is meant the source of water. The key word (*qarīnah*) in the first sentence is the word " *nazartu*" and in the second sentence is " *sharibtu*".²⁸

2. Seven *ahruf* represents the symbolic term.

Some scholars believe that this seven (*ahruf*) is not meant for the exact meaning of number seven between number six and number eight ²⁹ in arithmetic, but rather a symbolic term to represent plurality or numerousness ³⁰ in the act of recitation. This is because numerousness in the single figures (*al-āḥād*) is represented by number seven, just like seventy represents numerousness in tens and seven hundred represents numerousness in hundreds.³¹ Quoting this view, Ibn Jazari brings four examples of this type of meaning:

1. In the Qur'ān 2:261, God says, "as the likeness of a grain which groweth seven ears".

2. In the Qur'ān 9:80, God says, "though thou ask forgiveness for them seventy times".

3. In one ḥadīth, the Prophet was reported to praise one who practised a good deed that he will be rewarded until seven hundred rewards or more.

4. In another ḥadīth, the Prophet was reported to say that iman has more than seventy branches.³²

Here, this term is not meant for an exact number. By this seven (*ahruf*), Muslims from all walks of life are

allowed to recite Qur'ān in the best way they can,³³ even though it is not in its proper manner.

This view is said to be initiated by Qādī 'Iyād³⁴ and prolonged by his followers. However Subhī Sālīh rejected the idea that this saying is referred to Qādī 'Iyād.³⁵

The followers of this view argue that the *hadīths* clearly show us that the purpose of the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf* is to facilitate recitation for ^{the} *ummaḥ* as demonstrated by *ḥadīth* " *hawwīn 'alā ummatī*"³⁶ which means, make it easy for my followers (refer *ḥadīth* reported by Ubai).

Maurice Bucaille supports this idea that the figure seven is used to represent plurality and is not intended as an exact number. It is a symbolic numerical quantity.

He says; "the term 'world' reappears dozens of times in the Qur'ān. The heavens are referred to as multiple as well, not only on account of their plural form, but also because of their symbolic numerical quantity: 7."³⁷

He further says; "this number is used 24 times throughout the Qur'ān for various numerical quantities. It often carries the meaning of many, although we do not know exactly why this meaning of the figure was used. The Greeks and Romans also seem to have used the number 7 to mean an undefined idea of plurality."³⁸

In another place, he says; "Since 7 indicates an indefinite plurality (as we have seen), it is possible to conclude that the Qur'ānic text clearly indicates the

existence of more than one single earth (*ard*); there are others like it in the universe.³⁹

Therefore, many *riwāyāt* in the *ḥadīths* indicate that the Prophet forbade his companions from criticising other recitations and advised them not to be involved in dispute.⁴⁰

Ibrāhīm Anīs, one of the supporters of this idea in his book *fi'l-Lahajāt al-ʿArabiyyah*,⁴¹ quoted Ibn Jazari's saying, that "the Arabs have many *lughāt* and different accents. It is difficult for them to switch from one *lughah* to another, especially the elderly, men and women. What more if they are illiterate."⁴²

In this regard, Ibn Qutaibah says; "It is God who makes this facilitation, then ordered His Prophet to allow his *ummah* to recite Qur'ān in their *lughāt*, to take into account their customs".⁴³ The tribe Hudhail recite '*ḥattā hīn*' for '*hattā hīn*'⁴⁴ because this is the way they pronounce it. The tribe Asad recite '*ti^clamūn*' for '*ta^clamūn*', '*tiswaddu wujūh*' for '*taswaddu wujūh*'⁴⁵ and '*alam i^chad ilaikum*' for '*alam a^chad ilaikum*'.⁴⁶

Ibrāhīm Anīs further says, "the difference between this idea and our idea is that they confined their idea to Arab dialects, but we make it rather general, that is, this facilitation is meant for all Muslims, regardless of their tongues, their time and places".⁴⁷ In this respect, he gives an example of an Indian's recitation.⁴⁸ He says, we are not allowed to reject his recitation because it is the best he

can do. However, in this regard, he is determined that the aspect which is allowed to be different in recitation is *al-Nawāhī al-Sūṭiyyah*; ⁴⁹ that is:

1. The difference in the place of articulation and the difference in its characteristic (*makhraj al-ṣawt wa tabāyun fī ṣifatihi*), between *jahr* and *hams*, *shiddah* and *rakhāwah*, or

2. The difference in the place of emphasis of the word (*tabāyun fī mawḍi' al-nabr min al-kalimah*), or

3. The criterion of the soft sounds (*maqāyīs aswāt al-lain*). ⁵⁰

However , this view has been opposed on the ground that the ḥadīth narrated by Ibn ʿAbbās and Ubai has clearly indicated that this seven *ahruf* means precisely the odd number seven ⁵¹ which follows the number six and precedes the number eight in arithmetic. ⁵² What Ibrāhīm Anīs argues is not seven *ahruf* but rather *qirā'āt*.

3. Seven *ahruf* represents seven items.

Almost all Muslim scholars fall into this category. They agree that this "seven *ahruf*" represents precisely seven items. They maintained that this seven (*ahruf*) is meant for seven items . It is not a symbolic term for plurality. There are many examples either from the sayings of the Qur'ān or the ḥadīths which confine the meaning of the seven to the real and exact number seven which is well known to the

people and not a symbolic and metaphorical term. Examples in the Qur'ān:

"It hath seven gates, and each gate hath an appointed portion."⁵³

In another verse, the Qur'ān says:

"(Some) will say: They were three, their dog the fourth, and (some) say: Five, their dog the sixth, guessing at random; and (some) say: Seven, and their dog the eighth."⁵⁴

Although the majority accepted the view that this seven *ahruf* represents the exact number seven, neither more nor less, they differed in their interpretations of what is the exact meaning of seven *ahruf*. Now we look forward to examine this seven *ahruf* in the light of their discussions.

The ḥadīths of seven *ahruf* have been the subject of nearly forty interpretations and many brains were agitated to find out its true meaning.⁵⁵ However, Suyūṭī mentions only sixteen of the different views.⁵⁶ Another scholar, Ibn Hibban says that there are about thirty five views on this matter.⁵⁷ Suyūṭī doesn't second the thirty five views brought by Ibn Hibban.⁵⁸ However he mentions all the thirty five views in his book.⁵⁹ When we go through this thirty five views, we could divide them into three categories:

1. They are not related to the subject of seven *ahruf* or

2. Inclusive in each other in the sense that, these seven *ahruf* mean seven meanings (*ma'ānī*) , seven groups (*asṇāf*) or seven subjects (*ʿulūm*) or

3. Regarding tribe's *lughāt* and the way of recitation.

Mursī makes a remark on this. He says "Most of this views are overlapping and I do not know their chains of narrators and from whom they are transmitted".⁸⁰ He further says, "most of them are contradictory to the ḥadīth on 'Umar and Hishām, who were not disputing its interpretation (*tafsīr*) or legal content (*aḥkām*),⁸¹ but the recitations (*qirā'āt*)."

Let us check several views on this matter which are regarded to be authoritative for the purpose of further discussion:

1. Khalīl b. Ahmad⁸² says, this seven *ahruf* means seven *qirā'āt*.⁸³ Qastallāni says, this idea is the weakest⁸⁴ because, there are not many words in the Qur'an which can be read in seven modes.⁸⁵ Moreover, *Sab' qirā'āt* were selected by Ibn Mujāhid only in the third century. However, *qirā'āt* is regarded as possible in the sense that it does not mean the exact seven *qirā'āt* but, the accent of the recitation (*kaifiyyah al-qirā'āt*).⁸⁶

2. Seven ways of differences in the readings (*sab'ah awjuh fī wujūh al-khilāf fi'l-qirā'āt*).

This view was initiated by Ibn Qutaibah. He has demonstrated his view in his book *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān* and was regarded as the first who suggested this view. Rejecting other scholars' opinions on the meaning of *sab'ah*

ahruf, he says we base our arguments on the Prophet's *ḥadīth* that "the Qur'ān was revealed in seven *ahruf*. Every *ḥarf* is a sufficient cure. So recite of it however you wish".

He rejects the idea which says that seven *ahruf* means seven meanings such as, good news (*wa'd*), bad news (*wa'id*), that which is lawful (*ḥalāl*), unlawful (*ḥarām*), religious exhortation (*mawāiz*), parables (*amthāl*) and argumentation (*ihtijāj*). He also rejects the interpretation which says that this seven *ahruf* means seven *lughāt* in the *kalimah*. He says, all these ideas are wrong.⁶⁷

Based on the above-mentioned *ḥadīth*, he believes that the seven *ahruf* is seven *awjuh* from the dialects (*lughāt*) scattered in the Qur'ān (*sab'ah awjuh min al-lughāt mutafarriqah fi'l-Qur'ān*).⁶⁸ This is because the Prophet was reported to have said 'recite it however you wish'.⁶⁹

Commenting on this, 'Abd al-Sabūr Shāhīn says, what Ibn Qutaibah means is that seven *lughāt* are found not in one *kalimah* but scattered in the Qur'ān.⁷⁰ However, Shāhīn's view is obviously vulnerable when Ibn Qutaibah further says, "I have studied the ways of differences in the *Qirā'āt* and found them seven *awjuh*".⁷¹ By this, seven *awjuh min al-lughāt* is more likely to mean seven ways of differences in readings of many *lughāt*. To Ibn Qutaibah, seven *ahruf* thus means, seven ways of differences in readings due to the differences in *lughāt* which are scattered in the Qur'ān. The seven ways of differences are as follows:

1. A difference in the *i'rab* or *ḥarakah al-bīnā'* of the word which does not eliminate it from its form in writing and does not alter its meaning, for example, *hā'ulā'i banātī hunna at'haru lakum* and *at'hara lakum* 72 and etc.

2. A difference in the *i'rab* or *ḥarakah al-bīnā'* of the word which alters its meaning but does not eliminate its form of writing, for example *Rabbanā bā'id baina asfārinā* and *Rabbunā bā'ada* 73 and etc.

3. A difference in the *hurūf* of the word but not in its *i'rab* which alters its meaning and does not eliminate its form. For example, *wa unzur ila'l-izām kaifa nunshizuha* and *nunshiruha* 74 and etc.

4. A difference in the word which alters its form in writing and does not alter its meaning. For example, *in kānat illā ṣaiḥah wāḥidah* and *zaqyah wāḥidah* 75 and etc.

5. A difference in the word which eliminates its form and meaning. For example, *ṭalhin mandūd* and *ṭal'in* 76 and etc.

6. A difference due to the sending forward or putting back i.e. inversion. For example, *wa jā'at sakrat al-mawt bi'l-ḥaqq* and *al-ḥaqq bi'l mawt* 77 and etc.

7. A difference due to the augmentation or decrease. For example, *wa ma'amilat aidihim* and *wa ma'amilathu* 78

However, apparently Ibn Qutaibah allows only those who were in the time before the selection of *qirā'āt* by the

salaf to read the Qur'ān in seven ways of differences. After the selection, the people were not allowed but to follow *salaf's* readings to avoid disagreement.⁷⁹

In this connection, apparently Ibn Qutaibah was in agreement with Tabarī, in the sense that, nowadays, there are no longer *sab'ah ahruf*. He believes what we have now is what *salaf* had selected but it is more than one *harf*. On the other hand, Tabarī believes that, what we have now is one *harf* only because the Caliph^c Uthmān had selected it.⁸⁰ What *salaf* selected was not *sab'ah ahruf* but rather *qirā'āt* which is not identical with *sab'ah ahruf*.

In a way, both believe that *sab'ah ahruf* no longer exist but in another way, they were in an acute disagreement on the ability of reciting Qur'ān in seven *ahruf*. To Ibn Qutaibah, the recitation was allowed even after^c Uthmān. To Tabarī,^c Uthmān forbade the seven readings except one.

This means that, to Ibn Qutaibah, people after^c Uthmān were still allowed to recite the Qur'ān in different above-mentioned words whereas to Tabarī they were totally forbidden. After^c Uthmān they were allowed only to read according to one *harf*. Different wordings were and are absolutely forbidden.

Ibn Qutaibah's view on the interpretation of seven *ahruf* seems to be quite dominant among Muslim scholars. Many scholars follow his view, though they make a few amendments here and there. Abd al-Wahhāb Hammūdah has made his devotion to study Ibn Qutaibah's view in his book *al-Qirā'āt wa'l-*

Lahajāt.³¹ He has made a comparative study on the views of four scholars namely ; Ibn Qutaibah, Abū al-Fadl al-Rāzī, Ibn Jazarī and Abu Bakr al-Bāqillānī.³² However Hammūdah has based his studies solely on Ibn Jazarī's view in his book *al-Nashr fi'l Qirā'āt al-^cAshr* and not on Ibn Qutaibah's despite his seniority. Therefore, we notice certain misquotations from Ibn Qutaibah's sequences in his book *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*. Rāzī in his book *al-Lawā'ih* follows Ibn Qutaibah's view but with a different approach.

Actually, Ibn Jazarī adopted another view before he adopted Ibn Qutaibah's. He initially believed that, this "seven ahruf" is meant for plurality (*al-kathrah wa'l mubālaghah*). He pictured it as a good view, but *al-aḥādīth of sab'ah ahruf* precluded him from adopting this view.³³ Therefore, he says the second view which is similar to Ibn Qutaibah's was adopted after he had thought and studied for about thirty years.³⁴ However Ibn Jazarī does not claim that his view is the most correct one, but he hopes it is correct.³⁵ Here are his ways of differences:

1. A difference on vocalization without changing the meaning and the form. Example, *al-bukhl*.³⁶
2. A difference in the vocalisation which alters the meaning only. Example, *wa iddakara ba'd ummatin* and *ba'd amahin*.
3. A difference in the letters which alters the meaning but not the form. Example, *tablū* and *tatlū*.

4. A difference in the letters which alters the form but not the meaning. Example, *baṣṭah* and *baṣṭah*.

5. A difference in the letter which alters both the form and the meaning. Example, *fasṭaw* and *famḍū*.

6. A difference in sending forward or putting back. Example, *fayaqtulūn wayuqṭalūn* and vice versa.

7. A difference in augmentation and decrease. Example, *wa awṣā* and *wa waṣṣa* and so on.²⁷ *Muṣḥaf ahl Madīnah* and *ahl Shām* are written with 'alif'; *wa awṣa*, whereas *muṣḥaf al-Imām* without 'alif'; *wa waṣṣa*. In this respect, Abu Ubaid says he has seen *muṣḥaf al-Imām* without 'alif', that is *wa waṣṣa*.²⁸

Ibn Jazari further says, a difference in the way of pronunciation (*adā' al-kalimah*) is not to be considered in this regard because, it does not make any alteration to the word. If it has to be counted, It could be considered under the first *khilāf*.²⁹

For easy crossreference here is a chart to be compared with within these schools of thought.

<u>Ibn Jazari</u>	<u>Ibn Qutaibah</u>	<u>Rāzi</u>	<u>Bāqillānī</u>
1. Difference in ḥarakah without changing the meaning and the form.	the same	the seventh	the same
2. Difference in ḥarakah, changing the meaning only.	the same	the third	the same
3. Difference in letters, changing the meaning, not the form.	the same	-	the same
4. Difference in letters, changing the form, not the meaning.	the same	-	the same
5. Difference in letters,	the same	the first,	the same

both meaning and form change		the second and the sixth	
6. Difference in word order	the same	the fifth	the same
7. Difference due to augmentation and decrease	the same	the fourth	the same

On this Ibn Hajar comments, Rāzi has followed Ibn Qutaibah's idea with several adjustments here and there.³⁰ Looking into this chart, it is obvious that Hammūdah based his studies on Ibn Jazarī despite his more recent date and lack of any particular superiority over his senior Ibn Qutaibah.

Regarding the differences in the meaning, Ibn Qutaibah divides them into two groups:

1. *Ikhtilāf al taghāyur* (the meanings can be reconciled)
2. *Ikhtilāf al tadāḍ* (the meanings are contradictory)

He believes that seven ways of differences in reading are allowable because they fall into the first category; *ikhtilāf taghāyur* though they are different in words.³¹ For instance, the word *ummatin*³² which means after some time could be read *amahin* meaning forgetfulness. These meanings could be reconciled in the way that "the man had remembered Yūsuf's request after some time and after his forgetfulness".³³ The same thing applied to the '*rabbānā bā'id baina asfārinā*'³⁴ which is the way of invocation or seeking help, could be read '*rabbānā bā'ada baina asfārinā*' as a statement. The way of reconciliation is that the people of Saba' had asked Allāh to make them scattered in the country. So, they said, *rabbānā bā'id baina asfārinā*.

When Allah has made them scattered in the country and made their journeys longer, they said "rabbanā bā'ada" which means our Lord has made our journeys longer and has accepted our appeal. ۞۞

However, Ibn Qutaibah like other scholars does not recommend people to read according to seven *ahruf* i.e. seven ways of differences as interpreted. In a way, he was like Tabari in suggesting that people recite and read according to the *qirā'āt* which are concurrent with the *maṣāhif* only. Seven *ahruf* readings were allowable only to the people before *qirā'āt* had been chosen by *al-Salaf*. ۞۞ This means that Ibn Qutaibah believes that the *mushaf* and the *qirā'āt* which are practised by people today are no longer in seven *ahruf*, but a part of them. However, he does not mention to us, on what authority the *salaf* chose these *qirā'āt*.

In this connection, Ibn Jazarī is more reliable when he says, Every reading in accordance with Arabic (grammar) even if (only) in some way, and in accordance with one of the *maṣāhif* of 'Uthman, even if (only) probable, and with sound chain of transmission, is a correct (*ṣaḥīḥ*) reading, which must not be rejected, and may not be denied, but it belongs to the seven *ahruf* according to which the Qur'ān was revealed, and the people are obliged to accept, no matter whether it is from the seven *Imāms*, or the ten or from other than accepted *Imāms*. When one of these three conditions is not fulfilled, it must be rejected as weak (*ḍā'if*) or

exceptional (*shādh*) or void (*bāṭil*), no matter whether it is from the seven *Imāms* or from one who is older than they.⁹⁷

However, Ibn Qutaibah's view has been opposed sharply by Ṭabarī. To him seven *ahruf* is seven *luḡhāt* ⁹⁸ in the sense that the differences are in words (*alfāz*) only, but having the same meaning.⁹⁹

Ibn Qutaibah's idea is still prevalent today and many scholars adhere to his view, such as M.A. al-Zurqānī, 'Abd al-Wahhāb Hammūdah and M.A. al-Sābūnī.

3. "Seven *ahruf*" is seven ways of differences in words, but with the same meaning. For example: *aqbil*, *ta'āl*, *halumm*, *'ajjil*, *asri'*.

It means that the words are synonymous. This view is attributed to Sufyān b. 'Uyainah, Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī and others. According to Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, this view is held by many scholars.¹⁰⁰ Apart from the previous *ahādīth* they base this view on a *ḥadīth* narrated by Ahmad and Ṭabarī, that Gabriel said to The Prophet "Muhammad! read the Qur'ān in one *ḥarf*," Mikā'il said, "ask for more than that (Muhammad)", until he reached seven *ahruf*. Gabriel said, each (*ḥarf*) is salutary and sufficient so long as you do not seal a verse of punishment with mercy or a verse of mercy with punishment, as your saying: *ta'āl*, *aqbil*, *halumm*, *k'hab*, *asri'* and *'ajjil*.¹⁰¹

In this respect, Ibn 'Abd al-Barr comments, that this ḥadīth is to give examples that the *ahruf* in which the Qur'ān has been revealed are synonymous and there are no contradictions among the *ahruf*. He then relates the variant reading of the word *mashaw fīhi* ¹⁰² with *marru fīhi* or *sa'aw fīhi* to Ubai Ibn Ka' b and the variant reading of the word *unzurū nā* ¹⁰³ with *amhilū nā* or *akhkhirū nā* to Ibn Mas'ūd. ¹⁰⁴ Ibn Mas'ūd also was reported to have allowed a man to change the word *ta'ām al-athīm* ¹⁰⁵ to *ta'ām al-fājir*. ¹⁰⁶ This view has been explained in detail and defended by Ṭabarī in his introduction to his *Tafsīr*. Ṭabarī bases his argument on the ḥadīth reported by 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, that 'Umar was in dispute with Hishām b. Hukaim over the reading in *sūrah al-Furqān*.

Ṭabarī understands that, the charge on Hishām is that Hishām was said to have read this *sūrah* using different words, not similar to what the Prophet had taught it to 'Umar. The same thing happened between Ubai b. Ka' b and some other companions.

However, when they sought counsel from the Prophet, they were convinced that each and every one had recited the Qur'ān properly according to the revelation and the Prophet added, "This Qur'ān has been revealed in seven *ahruf*, so read what appears easy therefrom".

Ṭabarī agrees with the opinion that the permission to read the Qur'ān with synonymous words was given in the beginning when the Arabs were illiterate. This permission

was soon abrogated when people had been educated and could recite the Qur'ān properly according to the standard *ḥarf*; *ḥarf* Quraishi, because initially the Qur'ān was revealed in one *ḥarf*. The permission to read it in many *ahruf* does not mean that the people are obliged to read in seven *ahruf*.¹⁰⁷ It is a *rukhsah*. The *rukhsah* is *jā'iz* (permissible).¹⁰⁸ There is no harm for a person to read in whatever *ḥarf* he likes.¹⁰⁹ However, Ṭabarī believes that the Qur'ān which is in our hand today is not written in seven *ahruf*, because, 'Uthmān had made it into one *ḥarf* to secure people from being in dispute.¹¹⁰ 'Uthmān's action was endorsed by the companions including 'Alī,¹¹¹ his successor.

Ṭabarī's idea has been rejected by the followers of ibn Qutaibah, as they say, *aujuh khilāf* from seven *lughāt* has been scattered in the Qur'ān, whereas Ṭabarī says, it is within one word (*kalimah*).

In general, Ṭabarī's view has been opposed on the grounds that:

1. Hadīth Abū Bakrah is not meant to show that seven *ahruf* is confined to these synonymous words, but to show that the *ahruf* in which the Qur'ān has been revealed are synonymous and there are no contradictions in them.¹¹² If we look into the ḥadīths narrated by Ṭabarī himself,¹¹³ there only two synonymous words mentioned. More over these synonymous words are part of *ibdāl kalimah* with another, where in this case, there are words interchanged in some of

the *muṣḥafs*, but they are not synonymous. For example; *fatabayyanū* and *fatathabbatū*.¹¹⁴

2. Tabari's school has made a serious mistake when its scholars say that the Qur'ān which is in our hand today had been reduced by ^UṬhman by making them one *ḥarf*. There is no evidence what so ever for this.¹¹⁵ What ^UṬhman had done is to collect the Qur'ān materials from *ṣuḥuf*, put them in his *muṣḥafs* and at the same time maintained the seven *ahruf*.

People in the Prophet's time had disputed the reading of the Qur'ān with each other. However, the Prophet allowed them to read it in different modes. This was to avoid the dispute amongst the companions¹¹⁶ and not to suppress their readings as had been said by Tabarī's school.

It was almost impossible for the companions to cooperate in action against what the Prophet had allowed. To make one *ḥarf* and abrogate the rest means to close down the door of mercy (*bāb al-rahmah*) and lightening (*takhfīf*).

It was almost impossible that the companions had cooperated in actions against the Prophet's permission because whoever rejects (*kafara*) one *ḥarf*, he rejects all of them.¹¹⁷

4. Seven *lughāt* (dialects).

This view is said to be held by Abū ^Ubaid, Tha^llab, Azhari and many others and it was selected by Ibn ^Āṭiyyah¹¹⁸, and was supported by Baihaqī.¹¹⁹

The word 'lughah' should be distinguished from 'lahjah'. 'Lahjah' is a way to utter words whereas 'lughah' is the construction of words which bear a specific meaning.¹²⁰ Many different characteristics in a 'lahjah' could lead it to be another 'lughah'.¹²¹

Therefore, 'lughah' here is preferably translated as dialect and not language.¹²² The Arabs have many tribes and each tribe has its different dialect such as Quraish, Hudhail, Tamīm and so on.¹²³ This view has been opposed on the ground that, it is not proper to confine it to seven dialects and abandon some others. However, scholars of this idea answered that, what they meant by seven dialects are the most eloquent among them.¹²⁴

Though the followers of this opinion agreed to confine the dialect to seven which are the most eloquent of them, they differed in identifying these seven dialects.

For instance, Abū Ubaid was reported to relate the saying of Ibn Abbās that the Qur'ān was revealed in the dialect of Quraish and Khuzā'ah because they are neighbours and they can easily understand each other.¹²⁵

Another scholar, Abū Hātim al-Sijistānī says that the Qur'ān was revealed in the dialect of Quraish, Hudhail, Tamīm, Azd, Rabī'ah, Hawāzin and Sa'd.¹²⁶ However, Ibn Qutaibah has refuted this idea and says that the Qur'ān was revealed only in the dialect of Quraish.¹²⁷ He then quoted the Qur'ān "And we never sent a messenger save with the

language of his folk'.¹²⁸ In this regard, Ibn Qutaibah was supported by Abū 'Alī al-Ahwāzī.¹²⁹

Explaining his view, Abū 'Ubaid says, what they meant by seven dialects is not that every word is read in seven dialects but rather these dialects are scattered in the Qur'ān, some are of Quraish, some are of Hudhail, some are of Hawazin and so on.¹³⁰ It was also reported that the Qur'ān was revealed in the dialect of Mudar and Ibn 'Abd al-Barr says, the tribes Hudhail, Kinānah, Qais, Dibbah, Taim al-Rabāb, Asad and Quraish constitute the tribe Mudar..¹³¹

In this respect, Abū Shāmah tries to reconcile these opinions by saying that the Qur'ān was first revealed in the dialect of Quraish and their neighbours of the eloquent tribes, then it was permitted to the Arabs to read the Qur'ān in their own dialects they used to read the different utterance (*alfāz*) and *i'rab*. No one among them was ordered to abandon their dialect in order to recite the Qur'ān in another dialect because they would face difficulty in doing so and they were people who strongly hold their dialect. This permission makes it easy ^{for them} to understand (the Qur'ān).¹³²

Some other scholars added that the permission to read the Qur'ān according to the dialects was not given in a loose way that people could simply replace any word with its synonym but it must be based on the teaching of the Prophet.¹³³

This idea has been opposed on the ground that ḥadīth has clearly mentioned that ʿUmar and Hishām differed in their recitation even though both were Quraishite; having the same dialect. It seems impossible that ʿUmar disagreed with his own dialect. Therefore, these differences must refer to something else. ¹³⁴

5. Seven Articles. ¹³⁵

There is no agreement in identifying these seven articles among the followers of this view.

Some say that, it refers to command (*amr*) and prohibition (*nahy*), lawful (*ḥalāl*) and unlawful (*ḥarām*), unequivocal (*muhkam*) and equivocal (*mutashābih*) and parables (*amthāl*) ¹³⁶. They based their interpretation on a ḥadīth narrated by Hākim and Baihaqī from Ibn Masʿūd that the Prophet said: The old scriptures had been revealed from one door according to one *ḥarf* whereas the Qurʾān has been revealed from seven doors, according to seven *ahruf*, restraining (*zājir*), command (*amr*) and so on as above. ¹³⁷

This idea has been opposed on the ground that the content of this ḥadīth does not carry the ordinary meanings of seven *ahruf* because it does not seem reasonable that something is to be lawful and unlawful in the same *āyah*.

Even Baihaqī, the narrator of this ḥadīth has rejected this interpretation. He says that the meaning of seven *ahruf* in this hadith is the kind of content with which Qurʾān has been revealed, whereas in the other ḥadīths, it refers to the dialects uttered by people. ¹³⁸

Some say that who interpret seven *ahruf* as seven articles are *fāsid*, because the Qur'ān has not been allowed to be read wholly in lawful or wholly in unlawful or the like.¹³⁹

Ibn 'Atiyyah considers this view a weak (*da'if*) interpretation because the *ijmā'* has decided that the facilitation of recitation must not change the lawful to unlawful or vice versa. This applies to all the meanings.¹⁴⁰

Māwardī was more drastic when he said that this view is totally wrong.¹⁴¹ Once again Abū Shāmah here, tries to conflate these contradictory ideas by saying that it could be considered that the interpretation meant *abwāb* not *ahruf*. This means seven doors (*sab'ah abwāb*) of *abwāb al-Kalām* and its kind.¹⁴²

Tabarī has also rejected this view¹⁴³. He says:

1. This opinion is related to another matter, that is seven *abwāb al-jannah* and not related to what we discuss here.¹⁴⁴

2. The Prophet's traditions show that seven *ahruf* means seven dialects which are different in words but similar in meaning.¹⁴⁵

4. Hadiths of seven *ahruf* are fabrications.

This view is held by Khū'ī a Shi'ite scholar. He bases his view on:

1. The saying of Abū Ja'far who says that 'the Qur'ān has been revealed from one, and the differences come from the narrators.'¹⁴⁶

2. When Abū 'Abd Allāh was asked by Fudail b. Yasār about the people's sayings that the Qur'ān was revealed in seven *ahruf*, he replied that " they (Allāh's enemies) lied, it was revealed in one *harf* from the one.'¹⁴⁷

Although he brings many *hadīths* ¹⁴⁸ about the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf*, none was accepted by him as sound *hadīth*. There are three reasons why he rejected these *hadīths*;

1. The *isnāds* of these *hadīths* are not from *ahl al-bait*. To him, the reference after the Prophet in all religious matters must be the Qur'ān and *ahl al-bait* ¹⁴⁹ from whom Allāh has removed uncleanness and has purified them.¹⁵⁰

All transmissions which are different from what the Shi'ites consider true have no value. They do not need to speak about the *isnād* of these *hadīths*. This is the most important reason why he rejects *hadīths* of seven *ahruf* and considers them invalid and inauthentic.

Other reasons why Khūfī rejects all *hadīths* of seven *ahruf* are as follows:

2. There are many disagreements (*takhāluḥ*) and contradictions (*tanāquḍ*) in the narrations (*riwāyat*).

3. There is a disproportion (*'adam al-tanāsib*) between the question and the answer.

On disagreements and contradictions he says that in some narrations it was reported that Gabriel taught the Prophet in one *ḥarf*, then the Prophet asked for more until it reached seven *ahruf*. This shows that the augmentation was given gradually but in some other *ḥadīths* the augmentation was given all at once after the third request or after the fourth request.¹⁵¹ Some narrations show that the augmentation was given in a simple occasion after the Prophet's request on the advice of Mikḥā'īl, but in some other narrations that Gabriel had kept going and coming one time after another.¹⁵² In some *riwāyāt*, Ubai entered the mosque and saw a man reciting in a different way from his own. In some other *riwāyāt*, Ubai was already in the mosque when the two men entered and recited in different ways from his.¹⁵³

On disproportion he says that it happened between the question and the answer in the *ḥadīth* narrated by Ibn Mas'ūd. In this version, 'Alī was reported to answer that "the Apostle of Allāh orders you to recite (the Qur'ān) as you have been taught." This answer is actually not related to the question of what the people disagreed upon; the number of the verses (of the Qur'ān).¹⁵⁴

Hence, Khū'ī comes to a decision that the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf* is something unreasonable.¹⁵⁵ The *ḥadīths* should be thrown away because the Qur'ān had been revealed in one *ḥarf* and the contradictions came from the narrators.¹⁵⁶

This view has been opposed on the grounds that:

1. The idea that ḥadīths could only be accepted when they are narrated by *ahl al-bait* is not reasonable. The problem starts to crop up when Khūfī put the demarcation or the criterion of how ḥadīths should be accepted.

As a matter of fact, the Prophet lived in society and had many companions. He did not confine his speech only to his family but rather to all his companions and those who come to seek his counsel or clarification. There were many occasions where the Prophet discussed certain matters with his companions.¹⁵⁷

Khūfī's method in fact does not allow the ḥadīths to be evaluated in the light of scholarship. Khūfī has condemned all the ḥadīths which are not transmitted by *ahl al-bait* from the very beginning without any reservation.

It is acceptable that certain ḥadīths are not sound and are fabricated but to reject all the ḥadīths without any reservation is unreasonable.¹⁵⁸

The verse of the Qur'ān which stress the purity of the Prophet's family does not bring the meaning that narrations could only be accepted from them. If this is the case, it would be contradictory to the very clear suggestion of the Qur'ān:

"The noblest of you, in the sight of Allāh, is the best in conduct".¹⁵⁹

2. Khūfī himself falls into contradiction when he quotes many sayings from non-shiite scholars to defend his idea on

religious matters. For example, to reject the *tawatur* of the seven *Qirā'āt*, he quotes about seven non shi'ite scholars' opinion.¹⁶⁰

He uses Abū al-Faraj al-Asfahānī in condemning Sha'bi.¹⁶¹ In another case he relies on Abū Ja'far Sa'dān al Nahwī and Suyūṭī to show that this seven *ahruf* is something unknown (*mutashābihāt*).¹⁶²

He also quotes the saying of Zurqānī to refute those who believe that rejecting the *tawatur* of *qirā'āt sab'ah* may cause infidelity.¹⁶³

3. Another point is that, disagreement (*ikhtilāf*) on something does not mean that it does not exist. Khūf himself says that the contradiction among the narrators over some words of Mutanabbī's poems does not invalidate the ^Ssuccessiveness of the poem or its existence.¹⁶⁴

Hence, it is very unjust to discredit all the *ḥadīths* of seven *ahruf* on the basis that there are disagreements among the *ḥadīths*, because this principle could also be applied in this matter.

Having rejected the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf*, he should not use them at all, but he surprisingly accepts the *riwāyāt* that the Prophet forbade the dispute (*mirā'*).¹⁶⁵

In fact, Khūf's first reason is not without contradiction because the sequence of the reference in the religious matters should be the Qur'ān first, then the sunnah, but he

makes the Prophet as the first reference. The Qur'ān comes later and then *ahl al-bait*.¹⁶⁶

The contradictions do not harm the idea of the facilitation of the *qirā'āt* in seven *ahruf*, because they do not go beyond the perceptual form (*mulāḥazāt shakliyyah*). Of course, many *riwāyāt* will bring disagreements, but the important thing is that there is a single result despite many disagreements; the facilitation of recitation.¹⁶⁷

It is not true that there is a disproportion in the question and answer of the number of the verses of the Qur'ān because two verses could be streamlined into one and normally it depends on the way of receiving. Therefore, to settle the disagreement, the companions were advised to "recite according to what they had been taught".¹⁶⁸ Only two *sūrah*s involve this situation, they are *sūrah al-Ahqāf* (46) and *sūrah Mutaḥḥifin* (83).¹⁶⁹

However, Shāhīn praises Khūfī for refuting Ibn Qutaibah and Ibn Jazarī, because the reciters are agreed in most places in the Qur'ān. Therefore, if this point is to be taken into account, the seven ways of difference are in fact eight. This means that the Qur'ān was revealed in eight *ahruf*.¹⁷⁰ None of the scholars perceived this point before Khūfī.¹⁷¹

However, another Shīte scholar, Abū Abd Allāh al-Zanjānī has accepted hadiths on the revelation of the Qur'ān in seven *ahruf*. He chooses Tabarī's view as the best interpretation.¹⁷² He bases his view on the *ḥadīth*s which

cause people^{to} enter into disagreement^e, and when they seek counsel from the Prophet, he had made everyone correct.¹⁷³

Based on all these interpretations, we could deduce that:

1. There is no agreement on the interpretation of the hadiths of seven *ahruf*. Each school tries to establish its view which their followers adhere to. These disagreements infact have reached a stage that it is quite difficult to accept the interpretations, because most of them are irrelevant.
2. In spite of disagreements among them, Muslim scholars with the exception of several shī'ites, are unanimous that most of the hadiths on seven *ahruf* are sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*) and acceptable. The Shī'ite scholars, instead of rejecting the hadiths, accept the variant readings of the Qur'ān.
3. Regardless of what the disagreements are, we find that what the scholars disagreed upon is the way of the recitation (*Kaifiyyah Qirā'ah*). The dialects of the Arabs played a very important role in this respect. However, this variation is not the seven *qirā'āt* which were selected by Ibn Mujāhid.

The supreme importance is that, the differences over the interpretation of seven *ahruf* does not mean that the hadiths do not exist. For example, the shī'ites believe that the Prophet was born on the seventeenth of *Rabī' al-awwal*^w, whereas the sunnites believe that he was born on the twelfth

of *Rabī^u al-^āwal*. These differences do not invalidate the existence of the Prophet.

Muslim scholars regard seven *ahruf* as something different from seven *qirā'āt*. To them, "seven *ahruf*" is the way the Prophet allowed people to recite the Qur'ān, whereas seven *qirā'āt* is the way to recite the Qur'ān which was selected by Ibn Mujāhid from various famous Islamic centres, Medīnah, Shām, Basrah and Kūfah.

Looking into the discussions and the ideas on the meaning of seven *ahruf*, we could conclude that, most of the scholars are confused. Whatever discussions they may have done, seven *ahruf* is none other than the variant readings. Ibn Qutaibah's seven *ikhtilāf^{āt}* focus on the way to recite the Qur'ān. Tabari's seven synonymous words focus on the way to recite the Qur'ān. He says: *bi anna hum tamāraw fī tilāwah ba'd al-qur'ān fakhtalafū fī qirā'atihī dūna ta'wīlihī...*¹⁷⁴ Ibn Jazari's seven *ikhtilāf^{āt}* focus on the same matter when he says: *innī tataba'tu al-qirā'āt ṣaḥīḥahā wa shāzzahā wa da'īfahā wa munkirahā fa idhā huwa yar'jī^u ikhtilāfuhā ilā sab'ah awjuh min al-ikhtilāf...*¹⁷⁵

Abū 'Ubaid's seven *lughāt* focus on the way to recite the Qur'ān, because what he means by the differences are the languages of tribes and not the meaning of what the people recite.

No wonder some scholars believe that seven *ahruf* are none other than variant readings of the Qur'ān. They do not differentiate it from seven *qirā'āt*. However, when we look

further into this matter, there is a slight difference between seven *ahruf* and seven *qirā'āt* in the sense that, seven *ahruf* are more general than seven *qirā'āt*. Seven *ahruf* are the ways to recite from various codices of the Qur'ān whereas seven *qirā'āt* are the differences which are based on the Uthmānic *mushaf* only.

Every school has its preference in *ḥadīths*. For example, those who believe that seven *ahruf* are seven articles (*anwā'* or *aṣṇāf*), use *ḥadīths* which are relevant to their idea without looking into other *ḥadīths*. Those who believe that they are seven *lughāt*, use *ḥadīths* about the revelation of the Qur'ān in the language of Quraish and its neighbours. They use every evidence to support their claim to the extent that they use Qur'ān *sūrah Ibrāhīm*(14):4; *wa mā arsalnā min rasūlin illā bi lisāni qawmihi*.

Tabarī, uses *ḥadīths* about synonymous words; *halumma* and *ta'āl* as the basis of his argument. He also interprets *ḥadīth* Umar and Hishām in a way which could support his idea, that, Umar did not disagree over the language or something else other than the different words, which bear the same meaning.

Everyone has his own favourite *ḥadīths*. Thus, the discussions are not reliable because, everyone uses similar methods, i.e. preference (*tarjīh*) of certain *ḥadīths* to the others. This *tarjīh* method would not help solve the problems because each time a preference is made, it would increase the degree of *ikhtilāf*.

Footnotes

Chapter Two

1. 'Abd al-Sabūr Shāhīn, *Tārīkh al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Dār al-Qalam, 1966), pp. 25, 229-245. He has collected a series of the names of the Prophet's companions whom we could refer the *ahādīth* to. However, on p. 25 he gathers fifteen names, whereas on pp. 229-245 he gives only fourteen names replacing three names; 'Ubbādah, Anas and Hishām with the other two; 'Amr b. Dīnār and Abū al-'Āliyah.
2. Nawawī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ al-Nawawī*, "Kitāb ṣalāh al-Musāfirīn wa Qasrihā" (Cairo: Maṭba'ah al-Misriyyah wa Maktabatuhā, 1349 H), 6:98-104.
3. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, "Kitāb al-Tafsīr" (Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1377 H), 6:227-228.
4. Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1954), 1:11-20.
5. Bukhārī, 6: 227. Muslim, 6:101. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:14.
6. Bukhārī, 6:227-228. Muslim, 6:98-99. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:13
7. Muslim, 6:101-103. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:16.
8. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:16.
9. Muslim, 6:103-104. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:17.
10. Abū al-Khayr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Dimashqī (Known as Ibn al-Jazarī), *Al-Nashr fi'l-Qirā'āt al-'Ashr*

- (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, n.d.), 1:22.
- Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutaibah, *Taʿwīl Mushkil al-Qurʿān*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad Saqr (Cairo: Isa al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1954), p.30.
11. Shāhīn, *Tārīkh Qurʿān*, p.230 (note).
 12. Abū ʿUbaid ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Bakrī, *Muʿjam Mā Istaʿjam* (Cairo: 1954), 1:164. See also Shāhīn, *Tārīkh Qurʿān*, p.232. (note).
 13. This mosque was called *al-Harām* because after the ninth year of the Hijrah, when Islam was dominant in North Arabia the declaration of immunity of this area was revealed. See Pickthall, *The Glorious Qur'an*, pp. 25-26 (introduction).
 14. This *sūrah* is Meccan. See the list of revelations in Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist* (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijārah al-Kubrā, 1929), p.38. Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Zanjānī in his book, *Tārīkh al-Qurʿān* (Beirut: Muassasat al-ʿAlamī li'l Matbūʿāt, 1969), p.58-61 has made a list of *sūrahs* revealed before or after *hijrah*. He based his studies on works done by Ibn Nadīm in *al-Fihrist* and Noldeke in *Geschichte des Quran*.
 15. The Muslims had conquered Makkah in the eight year of the *Hijrah*. The year was called *al-fath* (triumph).
 16. Jalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʿān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 4 vols. (Baidar: Manshūrāt al-Riḍā, 1343 H), 1:163.
 17. *ibid.*

18. *Kufr* here is not meant for infidelity but ungratefulness.
19. Lane, *Lexicon*, book 1, part 2, p. 550.
20. *ibid.*
21. Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʿArab*, 10:385.
22. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:164.
23. *ibid.*, *Muslim bi sharh Nawawī*, 6:99
24. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:164.
25. *ibid.*
26. Abū al-ʿAbbās Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad bin Muḥammad al-Qastallānī, *Irshād al-Sārī li sharh Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (Beirut: Dār Sādir, 1305 H), 7:452.
27. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Zurqānī, *Manāḥil al-ʿIrfān fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān* (Cairo: ʿIsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, n.d.), 1:165.
28. *ibid.*
29. Zurqānī, *Manāḥil*, 1:146.
30. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:164.
31. *ibid.*
32. Ibn Jazarī, *al-Nashr*, 1:26
33. Ibrāhīm Anīs, *Fī'l Lahajāt al-ʿArabiyyah* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Anjalu al-Misriyyah, 1965), pp. 55-56.
34. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:164.
35. Subḥī Ṣāliḥ, *Mabāḥith fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān* (Beirut: Dār al-ʿIlm li'l-Malāyīn, 1985), p. 104.
36. *Muslim bi sharh Nawawī*, 6:99.
37. Maurice Bucaille, *The Bible, The Qurʾān and Science*

p. 125-126.

38. *ibid.* p. 126

39. *ibid.* p.127.

40. Ibrāhīm Anīs, *Fi'l-Lahajāt*, p. 56.

41. *ibid.*

42. Ibn Jazarī, 1:22.

43. ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, p. 30. The word 'ummah', in this regard probably means a tribe. See Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 1:155.

44. Qur'ān, Mu'minūn(23):54, Sāffāt(37):174, 178, Dhāriyāt (51):43.

45. Qur'ān, Āl 'Imrān(3):106.

46. Qur'ān, Yāsīn(36):60.

47. Ibrāhīm Anīs, *Fi'l-Lahajāt*, pp. 56-57.

48. *ibid.* p.27. It is almost well known that Indians cannot pronounce Arabic words properly. For example, *ḍāḍ* has usually been pronounced *ḡā*. Therefore, instead of *al-dāllīn* they read *al-zāllīn*.

49. *ibid.* p. 55.

50. It seems like Ibrāhīm Anīs has another interpretation of seven *ahruf*, that is the differences in *al-nawāḥī al-sūtiyyah*, though he claims that this is only aspects where disagreements are allowed.

51. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:165. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 1:143, 166.

52. See note 29.

53. Qur'ān, *Hijr*(15):44.
54. Qur'ān, *Kahf*(18):22.
55. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:164. Walī al-Dīn b. ʿAbd Allāh, *Mishkāṭ-ul-Masābīḥ*, ed. & trans. Fazlul Karim (Lahore: The Book House, 1940), 3:705.
56. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:164-172.
57. *ibid.*, pp. 173-176.
58. *ibid.*, p. 173.
59. See note 57.
60. *ibid.*, p. 176.
61. *ibid.*
62. Khalīl was the one who initiated *hamz, tashdīd, rawm and ishmām*. Abū ʿAmr ʿUthmān b. Saīd al-Dānī, *K. al-Nuqt*, ed. Muḥammad Sādiq Qamḥawī (Cairo: Maktabah Kulīyyāt Azhariyyah, 1978), p. 129.
63. al-Qastallānī, *Irshād al-Sārī*, 7:452.
64. *ibid.*
65. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:165.
66. Qastallānī, *Irshād al-Sārī*, 7:452.
67. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl*, p. 26.
68. *ibid.*
69. *ibid.*
70. Shāhīn, *Tārīkh al-Qur'ān*, p. 33.
71. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl*, p. 28.
72. Qur'ān, *Hūd*(11):78.
73. Qur'ān, *Saba'*(34):19.

74. Qur'ān, *Baqarah*(2):259.
75. Qur'ān, *Yāsīn*(36):29.
76. Qur'ān, *Wāqī'ah*(56):29.
77. Qur'ān, *Qāf*(50):19.
78. Qur'ān, *Yāsīn*(36):35.
79. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl*, p. 32.
80. Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:25-27.
81. (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahḍah al-Misriyyah, 1948).
82. Shāhīn adds another Ibn Qutaibah's follower, Makki
b. Abī Tālib al-Qaisī. Makki has defended Ibn
Qutaibah's view against Tabarī's which says that
the differences in *qirā'āt* nowadays are only
within one *ḥarf* since Uthmān has made it in his
Mushaf to avoid disputes amongst Muslims. Makki
says 'each and every *qirā'ah* taught by the Prophet
to his *ummah* from seven *ahruf* is permitted by
Allah. We do not oppose it if the recitation is
in agreement with *khatt al-mushaf*'. *Tārīkh Qur'ān*,
p. 36.
83. Ibn Jazarī, *Nashr*, 1:26.
84. *ibid.*
85. *ibid.*
86. Hammūdah gives different example from Ibn Jazarī's,
that is *qarh*. This word is not stated in Ibn Jazarī's
nashr.
87. Ibn Jazarī, *Nashr*, 1:26.
88. al-Dānī, *al Muqni' fi Rasm Masāhif al-Amsār*, ed.

- Muhammad Sādiq Qamḥawī (Cairo: Maktabah Kulīyyāt Azhariyyah, 1978), p. 106.
89. Ibn Jazarī, *Nashr*, 1:26-27.
 90. Hammudah, *Qirā'āt*, p. 19.
 91. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl*, p. 31.
 92. Qur'ān, *Yūsuf*(12):45.
 93. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl*, p.31.
 94. Qur'ān, *Saba'*(34):19.
 95. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl*, p. 31.
 96. *ibid.*, p. 32.
 97. Ibn Jazarī, *Nashr*, 1:9.
 98. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:20.
 99. *ibid.*, p. 22.
 100. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:167.
 101. *ibid.* Ṭabarī's version states two synonymous words only; *halum* and *ta'āl*. However Ṭabarī himself mentions other synonyms during his discussion. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:18 and 25.
 102. Qur'ān, *Baqarah*(2):20.
 103. Qur'ān, *Hadīd*(57):13.
 104. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:168.
 105. Qur'ān, *Dukhān*(44):44.
 106. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:168.
 107. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:28.
 108. *ibid.*
 109. Ibn Jazarī, *Nashr*, 1:31.
 110. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:28.

111. Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail* (appendix of his *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm*) (Cairo: ʿIsa al-Bābi al-Halabī, n.d.), p. 11.
112. Zurqānī, *Manāhil al-ʿIrfan fī ʿUlum al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār ʿIhyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabiyy, n.d.), 1:168. He interprets Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr saying in contrast with the interpretation of Ṭabarī's supporters.
113. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:18.
114. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 1:164.
115. *ibid*, 1:169. Qastallānī says that the Qur'ān was written completely in the time of the Prophet. Uthman only collected it into one *mushaf*. See *Irshād al-Sārī*, 7:446.
116. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 1:164.
117. *ibid*, 1:172. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:23.
118. *Muqaddimatān*, p. 268. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:401.
119. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:169. Qastallānī, *Irshād al-Sārī*, 7:452. Zarkashi, *Burhān*, 1:218.
120. Hammūdah, *Qirā'āt*, pp.4-5.
121. *ibid*, p.5.
122. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 1:155. The word *ummah* has been defined as 'tribes' of the Arab based on the situation when the Qur'ān was revealed. So, *lughāt* here could be related to the *lughāt* of the tribes, which actually means the dialects of the Arabs tribes.
123. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:169.
124. *ibid*.

125. *ibid.*
126. *ibid.* Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:402.
127. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:169. Qastallānī, *Irshād al-Sārī*, 7:452. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:402.
128. Qur'ān, *Ibrāhīm*(14):4.
129. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:169. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:402.
130. *ibid.*
131. *ibid.*, 1:169-170. In *Muqaddimatān*, p. 269, Ibn 'Atiyyah supports this idea.
132. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:170. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:402.
133. *ibid.*
134. *ibid.*
135. The terms used by the followers of this view are various such as *Sab'ah Ma'ānī*, *sab'ah aṣnāf*, *sab'ah anwā'*, *sab'ah 'ulūm* and so on.
Itqān, 1:170-172.
136. *ibid.*, 1:170. *Muqaddimatān*, p. 266.
137. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:170-171. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 1:216.
138. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:171.
139. *ibid.*
140. *ibid.* *Muqaddimatān*, p. 265.
141. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:171.
142. *ibid.* 1:172.
143. These terms have been mentioned by Tabari in his *Tafsīr*, 1:20, but he makes them in separate sub-title from seven *ahruf*. This to show that it is not seven *ahruf* of which relate to

- the *qirā'ah*, but rather *sab'ah abwāb al-jannah*.
144. *ibid.*
145. *ibid.*
146. Abū al-Qāsim al-Mūsawī al-Khūī, *al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Dār al-Zahrā', 1981), p. 177.
147. *ibid.*
148. Most of the ḥadīth brought by him are narrated by Tabarī. See Shāhin, *Tārīkh Qur'ān*, p. 29.
149. Shāhin's remark on this statement is that he is contradicted by his own statement, *Tārīkh Qur'ān*, p. 30.
150. Khūī, *Bayān*, p. 177.
151. *ibid*, p. 177-178.
152. *ibid.*
153. *ibid*, p. 178.
154. *ibid*, The ḥadīths on seven *ahruf* should be thrown away because the Qur'ān has been revealed in one *harf* and the contradictions come from the narrators.
155. Khūī, *Bayān*, p. 178.
156. *ibid*, p. 193.
157. For example in the case of Badr prisoners, he did not consult his family to make the decision but, his companions, such as Abū Bakr and Umar.
158. R. Bell in his book, *The Introduction to the Qur'ān* makes a decision that any ḥadīth which is in line

with the Qur'ān could be dealt with. He said, '... and while tradition may often throw light on the Qur'ān, we can only use tradition in so far as it is consistent with the Qur'ān or at any rate is not inconsistent with the Qur'ān properly understood. p. 20.

159. Qur'ān, *Hujurāt*(49):13.

160. Khūī, *Bayān*, pp. 152-156.

161. *ibid.* p. 165.

162. *ibid.* p. 183.

163. *ibid.* p. 159.

164. *ibid.* p. 158.

165. *ibid.* p. 183.

166. Shāhīn, *Tārīkh Qur'ān*, p. 30.

167. *ibid.* p. 31.

168. *ibid.*

169. *ibid.* p. 40.

170. Khūī, *Bayān*, p. 188.

171. Shāhīn, *Tārīkh Qur'ān*, p. 38.

172. *ibid.*, p. 37.

173. *ibid.*

174. Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:24.

175. Ibn Jazarī, *Nashr*, 1:26.

Chapter 3

The Preservation of the Qur'an

The Preservation of The Qur'ān.

The pre-Uthmānic preservation.

During the lifetime of Muḥammad no attempt was made to collect the revelations into one book.' Almost all Muslim scholars agreed on this matter. The verses had been written down from Muḥammad's lips from time to time at his order by his scribes or they had been first committed to memory, and then later recorded.

Using the word 'collection' alone for the Arabic word '*jam'*' might cause a great deal of confusion. This is because certain Arabic words have lost their original meaning. The writers on the Qur'ānic studies have constantly used several words about the collection and compilation of the Qur'ān, which should be clearly clarified and understood. One should bear in mind that the usage of the word 'collection' in this case must be connected with the idea of the preservation of the Qur'ān. In a way, to collect means to preserve. Otherwise, one might misconstrue certain uses of this word by ancient scholars.

There are three inter-connected Arabic words which should be clarified namely; *jam'*, *ta'līf* and *qirā'ah*.

The word *jam*^c has in usage several meanings. Ordinarily it means a crowd, multitude of men, army or a flock. It also means collection, gathering or addition.² In reference to the Qur'ān, it generally means to collect it in one's memory or to remember it by heart.³ This could be understood in either of two ways: to bring the Qur'ān together orally or through memory, or to bring it together in written form.

The word *ta'līf* means a book, a collection ⁴ or compilation, composition or writing ⁵ a book or an article or to make it together in a certain order. In connection with the Qur'ān it is sometimes used as a synonym of the word *jam*^c and sometimes it is used in the context of writing down together.

The word *qirā'ah* nowadays means reading a book ⁶ or any written material no matter what it is. However, in earlier days when written things were not very common it meant oral recitation only.

Suyūṭī reports from various authorities that each time the Prophet was taught five verses of the Qur'ān.⁷ Muhammad instructed his followers in the way to recite and to understand the Qur'ān. The companions studied the Qur'ān, not only for the purpose of recitation but also to understand its verses. They studied the Qur'ān and tried to memorize it.⁸ Some of them were said to have taken a long time to memorize the Qur'ān through this method. Ibn^c Umar was reported to have memorized *sūrah al-Baqarah* (Qur'ān:2)

within eight years.⁹ The companions used in their circles to study the Qur'ān or to memorize it in a group. Sometimes they listened to the recitation of the Qur'ān from their colleagues.¹⁰ In connection with this matter, Cragg comments

"the way to receive the Qur'an is to become its *ḥāfiẓ*, committing it entirely to memory so that its phrases and themes are constantly present for quotation and its meaning and music treasured in the heart."¹¹

However this does not mean that each and every revelation must be kept in every faithful mind. Muslim scholars believe that some verses of the Qur'ān texts had been abrogated or caused to have been forgotten by God. Therefore certain verses were to be left aside and were excluded from being composed together into the Qur'ān text.

Once Ibn^c Umar is reported to have said, "Let none of you say, 'I have got the whole of the Qur'ān.' How does he know what all of it is? Much of the Qur'ān has gone. Let him say instead, 'I have got what has survived.'"¹² It is said that *sūrah al-Ahzāb* (Q:33) used to be amongst *sab'ah al-tiwāl*; the longest *sūrahs* in the Qur'ān. Then it was reduced.¹³ In this regard there is a tradition attributed to ^cĀ'ishah that she said, "this *sūrah* used to be read as two hundred verses in the time of the Prophet. When^c Uthmān wrote the *maṣāḥif*, he could not find except what is present today."¹⁴

That implies that there are verses of the revelation which had been purposely and deliberately omitted from the *musḥaf*. The omission is in two ways; the verses which were absolutely and totally suppressed in the legal provision and its wording and secondly the verses which were said to have been withdrawn in respect of their wording alone but their legal provision is still authoritative and enforceable. An instance of the latter is, *āyah al-rajm* which ^cUmar said, was amongst the verses sent down to Muḥammad. The people in his time recited it, retained it in their memory and understood it. They awarded the punishment of stoning to death to the married adulterer and adulteress, following the Prophet's punishment.¹⁵ However, this *āyah al-rajm* had been excluded from our Qur'ān texts. The punishment of stoning for adultery by married people has been retained in the traditions only. Many versions have been brought to us, to the extent that we are doubtful of the report whether that particular *āyah* was previously a part of the Qur'ān.

Regarding the omitted verses there are many reports that not only ordinary people would have forgotten but the Prophet himself had forgotten certain verses of the Qur'ān. ^cĀishah narrated that, 'the Prophet heard a man recite (Qur'ān) in the mosque and said" May God have mercy upon that man. He has just reminded me of verse so-and-so from *sūrah* so-and so."¹⁶ In another version he said" May God

have mercy on that man. He has just reminded me of verse so-and-so that I had forgotten from *sūrah* such-and-such."¹⁷

Ismā'īlī's view is that the Prophet's forgetfulness of the Qur'ān material is of two types. Firstly that he had forgotten the verses by nature and the other that he has been forced to forget the verses of the Qur'ān.¹⁸ The former could happen to anybody, the Prophet and ordinary people as well. This forgetfulness may be caused by one's carelessness or being so busy in a certain matter ¹⁹ that he does not have any time to revise the Qur'ān. In this regards there is a report that the Prophet said to Ibn Mas'ūd " I am a human being like you , I may forget as you may ."²⁰ As to the latter, it was purposely designed by God to cause the Prophet to forget certain portions of the revelation so that no one will repeat the recitation. In other words their wordings were abrogated.²¹ Ismā'īlī relates this idea with Qur'ān 87:6-7, *sa nuqri'u ka fa lā tansā illā mā shā' Allāh*. He further says that this Qur'ān 87 falls under Qur'ān 2:106, *mā nansakh min āyah aw nunsihā na'ti bi khair min hā aw mithli hā*.

It appears from ḥadīth *nisyān al-Qur'ān* that the Prophet used to forget some verses of the Qur'an. On this Ibn Hajar comments that the Prophet might have forgotten matters which are not concerned with his *tablīgh*; what must be conveyed to his followers. If this was the case, he must have forgotten after the conveyance and he would not remain long in forgetfulness.²²

What we could deduce here is that there are two types of forgetfulness of which one is the absolute withdrawal of certain verses that makes people fail to recall them forever, even the Prophet, because *insa'* has been forced. The other is that the verses could be recalled again after being forgotten.

All this implies that there is Qur'ān material missing from the *muṣḥaf* that need not to be publicly recited.²³ The missing verses ought not to be included in the *muṣḥaf*.²⁴

To Muslim scholars, certain verses were deliberately excluded from the Qur'ān texts and they had not been missed. Exclusion must be done because the wording was no longer needed. It had been abrogated.

Muslim scholars with the exception of Abu Muslim al-Isfihānī, are agreed that, wording omitted from the *muṣḥaf* (the Qur'ān texts), whether it was replaced (*na'ti bi khair min ha*) or totally withdrawn (*ibtāl*), was a part of the Qur'ān which ought to be excluded from it because it had been abrogated from the texts.

According to various traditions all this revelation was not only recited and kept in mind but also recorded on whatever materials they found at the time it was about to be recorded such as; palm-leaves, leather, stone tablets or the shoulder-blades of goats and camels.

Many scribes were hired by the Prophet to write down the revelation such as; Zaid b. Thābit ²⁵, Ubai b. Ka'b ²⁶, Mu'adh b. Jabal ²⁷, 'Abd Allah b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarh ²⁸, Abū

Bakr, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān, ʿAlī b. Abī Tālib and many others.²⁹ Some of them even had written the revelation when they were in Makkah, before their *hijrah*.

However, the most popular among them in writing down the revelation was Zaid b. Thābit. In his *Ṣaḥīḥ* under *Bāb Kātib al-Nabīy*, Bukhārī mentions only Zaid b. Thābit as the scribe of the Prophet. Ibn Kathir comments, 'It is strange as if other narrations (which contain other names) failed to comply with his conditions.'³⁰ On this comment, Ibn Hajar retorts that, it does not mean that Zaid was the only scribe but due to his frequent services, only he was named as the Prophet's scribe. Moreover, this suits the singular of the title (*bāb*).³¹ He mentions some other names of men whose services were offered to the Prophet before the *hijrah* such as Abd Allāh b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ, and after the *hijrah*, Ubai b. Kaʿb.³² There was a report attributed to ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān the second Caliph, that he said, "when any portion of revelation was revealed to the Apostle of God, he called some of those who could write and said to them, 'put this (verse(s)) into this *sūrah*' which he mentioned".³³ Bukhārī preserves a ḥadīth to the effect that the Prophet used to select a certain person to write down revelation. He narrates,

Barrā' said, "When the verse 'not equal are those believers who sit down (at home) and those who strive and fight in the cause of

Allah' was revealed the Prophet said, ' call
 Zaid for me and let him bring the board, the
 ink pot and the scapula bone, or the scapula
 bone and the ink pot'. Then he said, "
 write: not equal are those believers who
³⁴

All in all, we could say that there were two ways of
 preserving the Qur'ān texts during the lifetime of the
 Prophet; either by memory (*hifz*) or by writing on whatever
 material was available at that time under the guidance of
 the Prophet himself. However this does not preclude that
 there might be private written sheets which were initiated
 by unofficial writers for their own use, for the Prophet
 was reported to have said, " do not write from me something
 other than the Qur'ān. Whoever does so, he must delete
 it."³⁵ For instance, Abū Khuzaimah al-Ansāri from whom Zaid
 obtained the last verse of *sūrah al-Tawbah* (*Barā'ah*)³⁶ was
 not considered amongst the Prophet's scribes.³⁷ He wrote
 the revelation on his own initiative. Looking into the
 above ḥadīth one may deduce that there were many companions
 who wrote the revelation on their own initiative.

There was no systematic arrangement of the record
 in the lifetime of the Prophet. The materials on which the
 revelations were written were not made up together in a
 single place. There was a remark attributed to Zaid b.

Thābit, "The Prophet died and the Qur'ān had not been assembled into a single place."³³

However, there were recognized chapters which are called *sūrahs* containing many verses or *āyāt* which were put forward by the Prophet.³⁴ The *sūrahs* were known to the companions of the Prophet by his direction or his recitation during the prayers. In fact Muslims' prayers are considered void if there are no portions of the revelations recited. It was reported that sometimes the Prophet recited short *sūrahs* whereas at other times he recited long *sūrahs* to the extent that some of the followers had to lean on their walking sticks. Hence, the *sūrahs* and the verses therein had been made known to the companions. Moreover almost all the companions, in their early days were settled in one place, that is Madīnah. They got used to hear from their teacher and, to recite as they heard them. Any addition to the revelations which were revealed "time by time little by little were added to by the command of the Prophet. The portions of the written revelations might be kept by the Prophet himself ⁴⁰ or by his scribes who would add these portions with new verses.

However, according to Muslim accounts, all these portions of the revelation, despite having been recorded on crude materials, were treasured up in the memories of the companions. They were urged to memorize these revelations for many purposes especially in connection with their task to teach new converts or for public or private devotion. In

this connection Muir says" The Coran was accordingly committed to memory more or less by every adherent of Islam, and the extent to which it could be recited was one of the chief distinctions of nobility in the early Moslem empire. Thus among a heap of warrior martyrs, he who had been the most versed in the Coran was honoured with the first burial. The person who in any company could most faithfully repeat the Coran , was of right entitled to be the *imām*, or conductor of the public prayers and to pecuniary rewards."⁴¹

There was no doubt that the revelation was not only kept and preserved in the hearts by the prophet's companions but it was also recorded on sheets or other materials such as palm-leaves, stones or scapula-bones in the time of the Prophet.

It was reported that Qur'ān had been written down by companions even before the *hijrah*, when the Prophet was still in Makkah. There were many occasions transmitted to us, showing that some of these companions used to use the written text to teach the Qur'ān to the new converts. Just before his conversion, ^cUmar was said to have set out to kill the Prophet, when Nu^caim b. ^cAbd Allah told him that Islam had already spread into his own family and pointed out to him that his sister and her husband had become Muslims. On this Ibn Hishām reports in one of either two narrations of the immediate cause which led ^cUmar to be a Muslim:

When ^Umar went to his sister's house he heard his sister and his brother in law; Sa^Uid b. Zaid reading a portion of the Qur'^ān together with another Muslim; Khabbāb b. al-Araṭ . When they heard that ^Umar was coming, Khabbāb hid somewhere in the house. Thereafter a dispute arose between Umar and his sister and her husband. ^Umar brutally attacked both his sister and his brother-in-law when they denied reading something which he heard. This attack injured his sister. On this, his sister and his brother-in-law reiterated" yes, we are now Muslims and we believe in God and His apostle and you can do whatever you like". When ^Umar saw the blood on his sister, he was sorry for what he had done and turned back and said to her, " give me this sheet which I heard you reading just now so that I may see just what it is which Muhammad has brought", for ^Umar could write. When he said that, his sister replied that she was afraid to trust him with it. 'Do not be afraid', he said and he swore by his gods that he would return it when he had read it. When he said that, she had hopes that he would become a Muslim and said to him, 'My

brother, you are unclean in your polytheism and only the clean may touch it'. So, ^UUmar rose and washed himself and she gave him the page in which was *Tāhā* and when he read the beginning he said 'How fine and noble is this speech. When Khabbāb heard this, he came out from hiding and told him that he hoped that Umar would be a Muslim for the Prophet had advocated to his God the day before, asking for the conversion of either Abū al-Hakam b. Hishām, known as Abū Jahl or ^UUmar b. al-Khattāb. After that he went to the Prophet and declared his conversion to Islam. 4:22

Muslim scholars believe that the portions of the revelations which had been recorded in the crude materials were not collected into a single book at the time the Prophet died. They were believed to be scattered somewhere in the hands of the Prophet's widows or his companions especially those who had served him as his scribes. By this, it was meant that when Muḥammad died there was no complete series of original transcripts of the Qur'ān.

A question may arise at this juncture whether the original transcripts written on the guidance of Muḥammad were then in existence. In this regard, Muir makes his remark "the preservation of the Coran during the life-time of Mahomet was not dependent on any such uncertain

archives...The Coran was accordingly committed to memory more or less by every adherent of Islam".⁴³

As regards memorization of the Qur'ān there are many sayings referred to the Prophet who was said to be very keen to urge his companions to recite and transmit it on an oral basis. Oral transmission of the Qur'ān was certainly based on memorization. The Prophet himself was said to be the first to transmit the Qur'ān by hifz. Even he was criticized by his God once, because he was so keen to commit it to his memory all at once. We read in Qur'ān 75:16-18:

"Stir not thy tongue herewith to hasten it.
Lo! upon Us (resteth) the putting together
thereof and the reading thereof. And when We
read it, follow thou the reading."

Not only did he commit the revelation to memory, but the Prophet also insisted that his companions follow him and keep Verses of the Qur'ān in their memory. He instructed them to memorize it. Many a companion had done so. There is a hadīth saying that "the best amongst you (Muslims) are those who learn the Qur'ān and teach it"⁴⁴. In another occasion, the Prophet used to ask his companions to recite the Qur'ān before him. 'Abd Allāh (b. Mas'ūd) narrated that "Allāh's Apostle said to me, "recite (the Qur'ān) for me". I said "Shall I recite it to you although it had been revealed to you?" He said "I like to hear (the

Qur'ān) from others". So I recited *sūrah al-Nisā'* (Qur'ān: 4) till I reached "How (will it be) then when We bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (Muḥammad) as a witness against these people." Then he said, "stop"! Behold, his eyes were shedding tears "45. Further discussion on this method will be made in chapter five.

When Abū Bakr succeeded the Prophet as his first caliph there occurred a battle between Muslims under Abū Bakr and Musailamah, the one who promulgated himself as a prophet, and his followers. This battle was known as the battle of Yamāmah. It was alleged that in this battle many of the memorizers of the Qur'ān were slain. It was said that there were about seven hundred *qurrā'*, the Qur'ān memorizers who had been killed. This critical situation alarmed one of the companions, ^cUmar, to the risk of leaving the revelation in this situation and led him to a suggestion of compiling it into a single volume. Bukhārī narrates in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*: 46

"Zaid reports, Abū Bakr sent for me on the occasion of the deaths of those killed in the Yamāmah wars. I found ^cUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb with him. Abū Bakr said, "^cUmar has just come to me and said, In the Yamāmah fighting death has dealt most severely with the *qurrā'* and I fear it will deal with equal severity with them in other theatres of war and as a result

much of the Qur'ān will perish. I am therefore of the opinion that you should command that the Qur'ān be collected." Abū Bakr added, "I said to ^cUmar, 'How can we do what the Prophet never did?' ^cUmar replied that it was nonetheless a good act. He did not cease replying to my scruples until God reconciled me to the undertaking." Abū Bakr continued, "Zaid, you are young and intelligent and we know nothing to your discredit. You used to record the revelations for the Prophet, so pursue the Qur'ān and collect it all together." By God! had they asked me to remove a mountain it could not have been more weighty than what they would now have me do in ordering me to collect the Qur'ān. I therefore asked them how they could do what the Prophet had not done but Abū Bakr insisted that it was permissible. He did not cease replying to my scruples until God reconciled me to the undertaking as He had already reconciled Abū Bakr and ^cUmar. I thereupon pursued the Qur'ān collecting it all together from palm-branches, flat stones and the memories of men. I found the last verse of *sūrah al-Taubah* in the possession of Abū Khuzaimah al-Ansārī, having found it with

no one else, "There has now come to you..."
to the end of the *sūrah*.'

The sheets[*ṣuḥuf*] that Zaid prepared in this manner remained in the keeping of Abū Bakr. On his death, they passed to ^ʿUmar who then bequeathed them on his death to his daughter Hafṣah.

Zaid, having been appointed to this task as compiler of the Qur'an started to sort out the various fragments of the Qur'ān from every quarter and gathered them from the rude materials such as palm-leaves and others and from the memory of the companions.

From the *ḥadīth*, it would appear that at first Zaid shrank from this task and he doubted the propriety, or even lawfulness, of attempting that which Mahomet had neither himself done nor commanded to be done.⁴⁷

This compilation had been kept by Abū Bakr as the head of the Islamic state.⁴⁸ It was said that this copy had been kept later by ^ʿUmar as the second caliph and later by his daughter, Hafṣah, the widow of the Prophet, because at his death, the third caliph had not been yet appointed.

There were arguments whether this compilation had been the standard text for the Muslims in the pre-^ʿUthmānic period or whether it was only regarded as a private possession of the Caliph Abū Bakr and later on his successor, ^ʿUmar.

During his caliphate, 'Umar had done a great deal for the spread of the text of the Qur'ān. Many Muslim men and women had memorized the whole of the Qur'ān by heart. He appointed paid teachers of the Qur'ān and compulsory education of the village folk was inaugurated. Once Abū Sufyān was appointed an inspector of Arab students. He was authorized to punish those who did not know a passage of the Qur'ān. Mu'ādh b. Jabal, 'Ubaidah b. Thābit, Ubai b. Ka'b and Abū Dardā' were sent to Syria to teach the Qur'ān.⁴⁹

Muslim scholars believe that after the advent of Islam, 'Umar was the first to gather the children in the elementary school. Appointing Amīr b. 'Abd Allāh al-Khuzā'i, he ordered him to keep the children occupied in attaining knowledge and fixed Amīr's salary from the government. Among the subjects taught in the schools in all Islamic territories in the time of 'Umar was the study of the Qur'ān. The Qur'ānic studies had been given preference to the other subjects.⁵⁰

However, none of the reports which come to us assured us that 'Umar had done something to compile the Qur'ān except suggesting the collection of the scattered rude materials to Abū Bakr. Any report attributed to him as the first who collected the Qur'an material may be construed as his collaboration with Abū Bakr in the collection.

Many suggestions are offered on why the revelation was not assembled into one place during the Prophet's

lifetime. Among other things, it is said that the revelation had not yet come to an end and some verses were supposed to abrogate others in their legal provisions or wordings.⁵¹

Others suggest that the revelation did not come down in one piece but at intervals and they were received by the Prophet continuously until the end of his life. The Prophet was said to live only about nine days after he received the last portion of the revelation. Based on these arguments it was said that Muḥammad did not leave any collection of the revelation he received to his companions and he had not arranged for it to be made in a single written place. There was a saying attributed to Ibn 'Abbās that he said, "Muḥammad left no more than what may be found between the two plates or covers (*daffatain*)"⁵² This means that Muḥammad had no role in arranging and collecting the Qur'ān into a single text.

J. Burton suggests that Muḥammad was purposely excluded from the history of the collection of the Qur'ān text.⁵³ Zaid had been pictured as a hero in the process of the collection and he played the central role in all the hadiths on the post-Muḥammadian collection(s) of the revealed texts variously attributed to the Prophet's first, second and third successors.⁵⁴

Hence, he believes that the theory of *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* has played a very vital role in the process of forming reports on the collection of Qur'ān text. He says,

"the theories have influenced the Muslim accounts of the history and the collection of the Qur'ān texts to the extent of consciously, deliberately and systematically excluding Muḥammad from all stages of the preparation and promulgation of the Qur'ān texts which we have before us today."⁵⁵

^cUthmān collection.

^cUthmān was elected to be the third caliph on Muharram 1, 24 A.H. He took over the office of Amīr al-Mu'minīn after the second caliph, ^cUmar, had been assassinated by Abū Lu'lu'ah.⁵⁶

In the meantime, Muslim soldiers led by their victorious generals had been far away into distant countries. A combined army of Hudhaifah b. al-Yaman, ^cAbd al-Rahmān b. Rabī'ah and Sa'īd b. al-^cĀs had penetrated into Azarbaijan and Armenia. It was Hudhaifah who marked the differences in pronunciation and readings of the Qur'ān amongst the soldiers that caused them to quarrel over this matter.

Alarmed by this, Hudhaifah went to Madīnah and warned the Caliph against the threatening calamity and asked him to save the *ummah* before they began to differ like the Jews and the Christians about their scriptures.

Bukhārī preserves a ḥadīth in his ṣaḥīḥ regarding this matter. He says: ۵۷

"Anas b. Mālīk Reports that Hudhaifah b. Al-Yaman came to ʿUthmān direct from the Azarbaijan and Armenian frontier where, uniting the forces from ʿIraq with those from Syria, he had had an opportunity to observe regional differences over the Qur'ān. "Commander of the faithful" he advised, " take this *ummaḥ* in hand before they differ about the book like Christians and Jews." ʿUthmān sent asking Ḥafṣah to lend him the sheets [inherited by her father, ʿUmar, from Abū Bakr, and now in her possession] " so that we can copy them into other volumes and then return them." She sent her ṣuḥuf to Uthman who summoned Zaid, Saʿīd b. al-ʿAs, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith b. Hishām and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubair and commanded them to copy the sheets into several volumes. Addressing the group from Quraish, he added, " Wherever you differ from Zaid, write the word in the dialect of Quraish for it was revealed in that tongue."

When they had copied the sheets, ^Uthmān sent a copy to each of the main centres of the empire with the command that all other Qur'ān materials, whether in single sheet form, or in whole volume, were to be burned."

Ibn Shihāb adds, "Kharījah b. Zaid informed me that Zaid said," I noticed that a verse of *sūrah al-Ahzāb* which I had been used to hear the Prophet recite, was missing. I found it in the keeping of Khuzaimah b. Thābit and entered it in the appropriate place."

This version was copied in several volumes. The scholars disagree about the number of the copies written under the supervision of ^Uthman. Suyūṭī says, the majority hold that it was five copies. However, Ibn Abī Daud quotes the saying of Abū Hātim Sijistānī that there were seven copies sent out to important Muslim centres, viz., Makkah, Shām (Syria), Yaman, Bahrain, Basrah and Kūfah. One copy was kept at Madīnah by the Caliph himself. ۞

A question arises at this juncture regarding what these four people had done.

Hākim believes that this committee had done nothing save to arrange the *surahs* of the Qur'ān. ۞ Till then the written

copies of the different *sūrahs* were only on loose sheets (*ṣuḥuf*).

This implies that there was no order in the sheets so put together. We see that many codices arranged by the companions are not similar to each other in their order. For instance, ^cAli's codex is said to be in chronological order. Ibn Hajar comments that " ^cAlī had collected (or learnt by heart) the Qur'ān, according to the chronological order, after the death of the Prophet.⁶⁰

Qādī Abū Bakr suggests that ^cUthmān had corrected the different pronunciations and preferred the known readings of the Apostle. al-Hārith al-Mahāsibi says that it was current among the people that ^cUthmān was the collector of the Qur'ān, whereas he only caused men to follow one reading.⁶¹

These two ideas suit what Ṭabarī believes. To him ^cUthmān had suppressed six *ahruf* of the Qur'ān and allowed people to read one *ḥarf* only.⁶² He had instructed the committee of Zaid b. Thābit and three others to stick to one *ḥarf*, that is the *ḥarf* of Quraish tribe. This is significant because three persons of the committee belonged to the Quraish tribe and their motive was to rewrite the variants of pronunciation only according to their standard speech.⁶³

Before ^cUthmān collected the Qur'ān, the companions still used their own *muṣḥaf*. The *muṣḥaf* of Abū Bakr cannot be considered as an authoritative or an official one because it was not applicable to everyone. During ^cUmar's time, there were no developments regarding the situation of the Qur'ān.

^cUmar only kept the Qur'ān which he arranged with Abū Bakr, which was collected by Zaid.

It can be seen from the above ḥadīth that the reason why ^cUthmān standardised the way the Qur'ān is to be read is because he felt that disagreement regarding this matter could disrupt the unity of the Islamic people. If we refer back to the discussion in chapter two regarding ḥadīth *sab'ah ahruf*, it can be seen that difference regarding the reading of the Qur'ān was one factor that brought about disagreements or disputes among the companions.

Disagreements not only occurred between the various *qabīlahs*, but also within a single *qabīlah*, as in the case where ^cUmar al-Khaṭṭāb disagreed with Hishām bin Ḥukaim regarding the reading of *sūrah al-Furqān*, both of them being Quraishite.⁶⁴ We should not be surprised if disagreement occurred between the people of ^cIrāq and of Shām, the result would be disruption of the unity of the Muslims.

^cUthman wished to make one type of reading of the Qur'ān a basis for uniting the Islamic people.⁶⁵ In general those who worked towards unifying the reading of the Qur'ān are those companions who stayed in Madīnah or nearby.

Historically, ^cUthmān unified the reading of the Qur'ān through consensus or after obtaining the agreement of the companions. There were reports stating that Abū Mūsā' al-Ash'arī and ibn Mas'ūd did not agree with ^cUthmān and they asked their pupils to read according to their own versions. However in the end they were said to have accepted the

muṣḥaf of ʿUthman and rejected the other *muṣḥafs* including their own.

It was said that in Madīnah there were some companions who did not accept the *ijmāʿ* of the *ṣahābah* which accepted the *muṣḥaf* of ʿUthman. These companions were ʿAlī and his followers.

After the death of the Prophet, ʿAlī was said to have vowed not to wear his *Jumʿah* dress until he had completed collecting the Qurʾān.⁶⁶ The meaning of this is that ʿAlī would not go out of his house until he had compiled the Qurʾān. Some scholars are of the opinion that this means that ʿAlī would not go out of the house until he has finished memorising the Qurʾān⁶⁷ because he wanted to prevent the Qurʾān from being lost. It was said that the Caliph Abū Bakr, having heard the story regarding this vow of ʿAlī, called ʿAlī to see him and asked ʿAlī about this matter. He advised ʿAlī not to continue doing what he had sworn and to accept the work of the Caliph. ʿAlī agreed to this.⁶⁸

Hence, when ʿUthmān was collecting the Qurʾān, ʿAlī was not projected as being an opponent of ʿUthman's efforts.⁶⁹ ʿAlī is said to have said that "if ʿUthmān had not done it, he would have done it himself".⁷⁰ In another *riwāyah* ʿAlī is said to have said that "If I were in ʿUthmān's place, I would have done that work"⁷¹ (i.e. collecting the Qurʾān into one *muṣḥaf*).

The companions were said to have given compliments and asked for good fortune and *barakah* for ʿUthmān's efforts. The

Shi'ites were said to have accused 'Uthmān of expunging five hundred verses of the Qur'ān ⁷² which praised 'Alī and which mentioned 'Alī as Muhammad's successor. This accusation was answered by 'Alī's words as quoted in the previous paragraph. In addition Ibn 'Abbās, a strong supporter of 'Alī, also supported and praised 'Uthman's efforts.

It is reasonably argued on the other side that if 'Uthman really did expunge some verses of the Qur'ān which praised 'Alī and appointed 'Alī as Caliph after the death of Rasūl Allāh, then 'Alī would have changed this when he became the Caliph after 'Uthmān. It is clear that he did not do so. ⁷³

There are some ḥadīths which tried to unite the conflicting ideas of the collection of the Qur'ān text. Mus'ab bin Sa'd reports that 'Uthmān, while lecturing to the public, has said: ⁷⁴

"It is now thirteen years since your Prophet left you and you are not unanimous on the Qur'ān. You talk about the reading of Ubai and the reading of 'Abd Allāh. Some even say, 'By God! my reading is right and yours is wrong.' I now summon you all to bring here whatever part of the Book of God you possess." One would come with a parchment or a scrap of leather with a Qur'ān verse on it until there was gathered great store of such.

^cUthmān adjured them one by one, "You heard the Prophet recite this?" They would answer that that was so. After this ^cUthmān asked, "Whose acquaintance with the Book is greatest?" They replied, "His who wrote it out for the Prophet." He asked, "Whose Arabic is best?" They replied, "Sa^cīd's." ^cUthmān said, "Let Sa-
^cīd dictate and Zaid write."...

Muṣ^cab adds, "I heard some companions of the Prophet say, ^cUthmān did well to undertake it."

Hudhaifah is implicated in many hadith regarding ^cUthmān's efforts in collecting the Qur'ān. It was he who suggested to ^cUthmān to collect the Qur'ān into one *mushaf* to prevent disputes regarding differences in the Qur'ān text after the death of the Prophet, as in the hadith previously mentioned. On another occasion, Hudhaifah was portrayed as suggesting that ^cUthmān should remove the various discrepancies in the Qur'ān text or discard the various texts of the Qur'ān.

Hudhaifah said to ^cUthmān, "whatever you would do if you heard someone talking of the reading so-and-so, and the reading of another, as the non-Muslims do, then do it now."⁷⁵

In another instance Hudhaifah said, 'Kūfans say "the text of ʿAbdullah", the Basrans say "the text of Abū Mūsā". By God if I reach the commander of the faithful, I will recommend that he drown these readings.'⁷⁶

ʿAbd Allah, Hudhaifah and Abū Mūsā were on the roof of Abū Mūsā's house. ʿAbd Allah said to Hudhaifah, "I hear you say such-and-such." Hudhaifah said, "Yes, I deplore folk talking about this one's reading and that one's reading. They differ like *ahl al-Kitāb*." When the prayer time came ʿAbd Allāh was asked to lead the prayer but he refused. When Hudhaifah was asked to do so, he refused too. Then Abū Mūsā was asked to lead the prayer because he was the owner of the house.⁷⁷

In another *riwāyah* it was said that they were in Abū Mūsā's house where Hudhaifah said to Abū Mūsā, "ʿAbd Allāh b. Qais, you were sent to the Basrans as governor and teacher. They have adopted your *adab*, your dialect and your text." To ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd he said, "You were sent to the Kūfans as their teacher and they have

adopted your *adab*, your dialect and your reading." In that case, retorted Ibn Mas'ūd, "Thus, I have not misled them. There is no verse in the Book of God but that I know where and in what connection it was revealed. Did I know of anyone more learned than myself on the subject I should go to him." >

With regard to this matter, it is as if 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd and Abū Musā al-Ash'ari were the cause of disagreement among the Muslims in the reading of the Qur'ān. Their rejection of 'Uthmān's efforts is further exemplified when they asked their followers to do everything possible to keep their *mushaf* and protect it from being taken by the ruler or destroyed.

These two were also said to have asked their supporters to accept 'Uthmān's *mushaf* by combining this *mushaf* with the *mushaf* that they already have. 'Uthmān's *mushaf* should be added to make up for what is lacking in it, but nothing is to be done to anything found lacking in their own *mushaf*.

The above-mentioned saying attributed to 'Abd Allāh b. Mas'ūd tells us that he considers himself to be the most knowledgeable person in the various aspects of the Qur'ān. Owing to this he was so confident that he has never deceived the public about this work.

In the hadīth ^CAbd Allah b. Mas^Cūd has been quoted as saying that he knows where and when the verses were revealed and the reasons for their revelation. The words where and in what connection the verses were revealed illustrate the relationship between a revelation and an occasion because usually a verse which was revealed was related to the possibility or otherwise of a certain action or endorsement of a certain occasion. In Ibn Mas^Cūd's case he is said to have claimed that he was the champion of the knowledge of the Qur'ān. Thus, he did not need any advice from any people regarding the Qur'ān, least of all from Zaid , as Zaid was young at the time he had learned about seventy *sūrahs* direct from the Prophet's mouth.⁷⁹ However, compared to the other hadith mentioned before that Ibn Mas^Cūd refused to lead the prayer when Hudhaifah was amongst them (so was Hudhaifah). It seems ~~as though~~ Ibn Mas^Cūd was here less confident of his reading or else he refused to be the *imām* of the prayer due to his respect to Hudhaifah; the guest or the owner of the house was the preference.

We see that ^CUthmān was not successful in his efforts to unify the Qur'ān readings. After ^CUthmān sent the *muṣḥaf* which he had written to all the territories that he ruled, the people still used the text which had been taught to them before by their own teachers. The people of Basrah used the reading of Abū Mūsā while those of Kūfah used the reading of Ibn Mas^Cūd. The people of Shām used the text of Ubai. All of them did not want to discard the text which they were using

which they considered to have come or originated from the Prophet.

According to the majority of Islamic writers, before Uthman sent his *muṣḥaf* throughout his kingdom, the readings used in most of the regions, which were based on the readings of the companions, are included under the category of *sabʿah aḥruf*, as discussed in chapter two.

Sabʿah aḥruf is the reading received from the Prophet, which may use different words which are synonymous, or which has been added to or shortened, on which the Prophet has given his consent. This is so with all the codices possessed by the companions. It is quite different from *qirāʾāt sabʿah* which are the variant styles of reading based on the *muṣḥaf* of ʿUthmān only. Therefore, it can be said that the pre-ʿUthmānic variant readings are part of *sabʿah aḥruf*, and a portion of this was withdrawn by ʿUthmān such as the addition of extra letters or alteration in the place of certain words. On the other hand, *qirāʾāt sabʿah* are the variant styles of readings without involving any substitution of words or alteration in the position of the words.

On the whole *qirāʾāt sabʿah* is a part of *sabʿah aḥruf*. The majority of the scholars including Mālik, Ibn Qutaibah and Ibn Jazarī did not allow *sabʿah aḥruf* readings in prayers, except those verses which were written down in ʿUthmān's *muṣḥaf*.⁸⁰ However they did not reject the variant readings of *qirāʾāt sabʿah* in prayers.

According to J. Burton, *sab'ah ahruf* and *qirā'āt sab'ah* are not different from each other. All of the different readings are included in the term variant readings and are supposed to have been transmitted by the companions and derived from the Prophet himself. The Prophet knew of the existence of variant readings and apparently allowed them.⁸¹

The wording of the Qur'ān is not its most relevant feature. The meaning matters above all.⁸² In other words, differences in utterance are not material. The meaning is paramount. The differing readings are all equally valid, having been revealed in parallel. The difference appears to consist simply in the use of this as opposed to that synonym.⁸³ This should not cause any surprise or alarm, nor should it cause any squabbling or scandal.

To Muslim scholars the variants due to writing do not matter. This can be understood only by those who know the Arabic script. Short vowels were not marked in earlier days. They were invented later. Even nowadays non-Arabs cannot read an Arabic book or any written material without good knowledge of Arabic grammar. Certainly there are mistakes, if mistakes they can be called. The most important thing in the Qur'an case is the reading.

To conclude it is nice to bring what W. Muir says in his book, *The Life of Mahomet*, that the recension of Uthmān has been handed down to us unaltered. So carefully, indeed, has it been preserved, that there are no variations of importance- we might almost say no variations at all- among

the innumerable copies of the Qur'ān scattered throughout the vast bounds of the empire of Islam. The Qur'ān was passed to ʿUthmān by his predecessors, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar without any alterations too. He further says that every verse in the Qur'ān is genuine and unaltered composition of Muḥammad himself, and we may conclude with at least a close approximation to the verdict of Von Hammer: *That we hold the Coran to be as surely Mahomet's word, as the Mahometans hold it to be the word of God.*^{§14}

Footnotes

Chapter Three.

1. W. Muir, *The Coran* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1896), p. 37.
2. J.G. Hava, *al-Farā'id al-Durriyyah*, (Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Sharqiyyah, 1986). Hens Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic*, ed. J. M. Cowan (New York: Spoken Language Services, Inc., 1976).
3. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:204. Ajmal Khan, *Earliest Collection*, p. 193.
4. Hava, *al-Faraid*.
5. Hans Wehr, *Dictionary*.
6. Hava, *al-Farā'id*.
7. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:156.
8. *ibid.*, 4:202.
9. *ibid.*
10. Abū 'Abd Allah al-Hākim, *al-Mustadrak* (Haiderabad: Dā'irah al-Ma'ārif al-Nizāmiyyah, 1334), 1:94.
11. Kenneth Cragg, *The Mind of the Qur'ān* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1973), p. 26.
12. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:81-82. Burton, *Collection*, p. 117.
13. Abū 'Abd Allah al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr* (Teheran: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1970), 3:230.
14. Siyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:82.
15. *Muslim bi sharḥ Nawawī*, K. hudud, 11:191.
16. Bukhārī, K. Fadā'il al-Qur'ān, bāb Nisyan al-Qur'ān.
17. *ibid.*

18. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:463.
19. *ibid.* p.461.
20. *ibid.* p.463.
21. *ibid.* pp.461-463.
22. *ibid.* p.461.
23. Burton, *Collection*, p.130.
24. *ibid.*
25. Bukhārī, K. *Fadāil al-Qur'ān*, bāb Jam' al-Qur'ān and Kātib al-Nabiyy.
26. *ibid.* bāb Qur'rā' min Ashāb al-nabiyy. See also Ibn Hajar *Fath*, 10:397.
27. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:397.
28. *ibid.*
29. *ibid.*
30. *ibid.* p. 396.
31. *ibid.*
32. *ibid.*
33. *ibid.* p. 397.
34. Bukhārī, K. *Fadāil al-Qur'ān*, bāb Kātib al-Nabiyy.
35. Muslim, K. *al-Zuhd*.
36. Bukhārī, K. *fadāil al-Qur'ān*, bāb Jam' al-Qur'ān.
37. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-A'zamī in his book, *Kuttāb al-Nabiyy* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islami, 1974), has worked out from every single source the scribes of the Prophet Muḥammad and he claims that his discovery is the latest figure listing forty eight names.
38. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:385.

39. *Tawqīfī*.
40. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:207.
41. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 551-552.
42. Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah al-Nabiyy*, 1:365-368.
43. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 551.
44. Bukhārī, K. faḍā'il al-Qur'ān, bāb Khair kum man ta'alam al-Qur'ān.
45. Ibid. bāb Qawl al-Muqri' li al-Qāri' hasbuk.
46. ibid. bab Jam' al-Qur'ān.
47. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, p. 556.
48. Muir was not sure as to whom the first compilation of the Qur'ān had been kept. He assumes that it was probably kept by Abū Bakr during the short remainder of his reign. See ibid. p. 556.
49. M. Ajmal Khān, "An Inquiry Into The Earliest Collection of The Qur'ān", *Studies In Islam* 1 (1964), 207.
50. Abdul Latif b. Duhaish, "Elementary Schools in Hijaz During the Half Century", *Islamic Culture* 60 (July 1986), 39-40.
51. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:202. Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, 10:386.
52. Bukhārī, K. faḍā'il al-Qur'ān, bāb Lam yatruk al-Nabiyy.
53. Burton, *Collection*, p. 132.
54. ibid. p. 118.
55. ibid. pp. 131-132.
56. 'Azamī, *Kuttāb al-Nabiyy*, p. 99.
57. Bukhārī, K. Faḍā'il al-Qur'ān, bāb Jam' al-Qur'ān.
58. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:211. Abū 'Amr 'Uthmān al-Dānī

says in his book, *al-Muqni^c fi Rasm Maṣāḥif al-Amsār*, p. 19, that there is a saying that Uthmān has made four copies of the text of the Qur'ān which he later on sent three of them to Kūfah, Baṣrah and Shām. One was kept under his custody.

59. *ibid.* p. 1:208.
60. Zanjānī, *Tārīkh al-Qur'ān*, pp. 47-48.
61. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:210-211. Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail Tafsīr*, p. 14.
62. Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:28.
63. Ibn Nadīm, *Fihrist*, p. 37. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:208
64. Bukhārī, K. *Fadā'il Qur'ān*, bāb *Nuzūl al-Qur'ān^c alā Sab^cah Ahruf*.
65. Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail Tafsīr*, p. 11.
Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:28.
66. Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail Tafsīr*, p. 14
67. *ibid.*
68. *ibid.*
69. Burton, *Collection*, p. 144.
70. Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail Tafsīr*, p. 11.
71. Dānī, *Muqni^c*, p. 18.
Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:211.
72. Ignaz Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, ed. S.M. Stern (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1971), 2:109.
Burton, *Collection*, p. 145.
73. W. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, (appendix), p. 559.
74. Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail*, p. 14.

75. Dāni, *Muqni*⁶, p. 16.
76. Burton, *Collection*, p. 147.
77. Ibn Abī Daud, *K. Maṣāḥif*, p. 14.
78. *ibid.* See also Ibn Kathīr, *Dhail*, p. 13.
79. Ibn Abi Daud, *K. Maṣāḥif*, pp. 14-15.
80. Ibn Qutaibah, *Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān*, p. 32.
81. Burton, *Collection*, p. 148.
82. *ibid.*
83. *ibid.* p. 149.
84. W. Muir, *Life of Mahomet*, passim. 557-563. The word Coran is spelt Qur'ān and the word Mahomet, Muhammad except in italic words where they are not respelt.

Chapter 4

Naskh of the Qur'ān

Naskh of the Qur'ān.

The importance of *naskh*

Naskh of the Qur'ān is a subject of dispute among the scholars. Much effort has been made to explain the actuality of this matter. Scholars have disagreed not only on the meaning of *naskh*, but also its essence, categories and precise verses which are said to have appeared to be *nāsikhāt* ¹ and *mansūkhāt*.²

People are quite confused as to what verses this concept applies. Looking into the history of *naskh*, we find that even the companions were not sure as to what the precise matter is all about.

Most of them regarded this subject as part and parcel of the *mutashābihāt* of the Qur'ān. In this connection, Ibn Mas'ūd said, "*al-muḥkamāt* = *al-nāsikhāt wa'l-mutashābihāt* = *al-mansūkhāt* ³. Another companion, Ibn 'Abbās also regarded the verses which are abrogated (*mansūkhāt*) as a part of the *mutashābihāt* of the Qur'ān.⁴ The *mutashābihāt* contain *taṣrīf*, *tahrīf* and *ta'wīl* by which God tests people.⁵

This means that some of the *āyāt* of the Qur'ān have not been considered authoritative in their command. They cannot stand on their own. To consider their ruling, some other

āyāt must be read together with them, otherwise, the outcome will be different from the divine aims.

Muslim scholars point out that knowing *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*, its concept and application is vital. It is inevitable especially to those who work on legal affairs (*ahkām*), such as *qādīs* or judges.

Sayings on the importance of this branch of knowledge have been attributed to many people in the first generation of Islamic era. Those who were ignorant of this *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* were not allowed to teach people in the religious matters, especially in the Qur'ānic matters.

Once, Hudhaifah was said to have said that only three categories of people are allowed to speak in public (teach); the *amīr*, the person appointed by him and those who know *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*. The fourth is foolish and pretentious.

The companions were said to be very cautious of this *nāsikh* and *mansūkh* when they came to explain the verses of the Qur'ān. They also made other people alert to it.

Once, the fourth caliph ^cAlī b. Abī Tālib was said to have been in the masjid Jāmi' in Kūfah. He saw a man called ^cAbd al-Rahmān b. Da'b, a friend of Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī surrounded by people who were asking him questions about the religion. This man was confused between 'commanded' and 'prohibited' and between 'permissible' and 'forbidden', and when he admitted that he did not know the *nāsikh* and the *mansūkh*, ^cAlī said to him, "You have lost your soul and caused

others to lose theirs".¹⁰ Then, he twisted the man's nose and forbade him to continue teaching religion.¹¹

The meaning of naskh.

The word *naskh* in Arabic language has many meanings¹² such as withdrawal (*ibtāl*) removal and suppression (*izālah* and *i'dām*), change (*tabdīl*), transfer (*tahwīl*), transportation and transcription (*naql*).

Scholars are not in agreement on what is the actual meaning of the word *naskh*. Looking into the usage of this word, we find that, the word varies in meaning according to the desire of users. For instance, the companions and the successors took *naskh* in a literal sense (*lughawī*) that is of removal (*izālah*) and not in the (more restricted) technical sense of the scholars of the theoretical bases of Islamic law (*uṣūliyyūn*). The latter took *naskh* as removal of a provision in an earlier Qur'ān verse by a later Qur'ān verse.¹³ Due to this, we find that, in the course of Qur'ānic studies, too much time and strength have been sacrificed to determine what is the actual state of matter of this word. The more the research the bigger the gap between scholars.

In this regard, Shāh Walī Allāh is very determined to say that, to look into this matter through *āthār* and to hope for the fully agreed matter would cause someone to lose ages.¹⁴

However this does not mean that there is no way to look into the matter and no discussion is worthy. Disagreement does not mean pointlessness. In the case of Qur'ānic studies, it is very important because it will determine situations in Islamic legal matters as we have discussed before. For Muslim scholars, the ability to distinguish the *nāsikh* from the *mansūkh* is essential for the understanding of the will of God in its final form.¹⁴ Someone is said to be of no capability to elucidate *kitāb Allāh* unless he knows the science of *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*.¹⁵

Naskh terminologically has been defined as "the repeal of an enactment (*ḥukm*) by means of a (later) indication (*dalīl*)"¹⁶. This is one of the meanings of the term *naskh* which is felt to be the nearest to the truth.¹⁷

By *naskh*, the scholars understood, in the most general terms, that revelatory process by which certain of the divine decisions, enacted at a given date, had been overtaken, and superseded by other divine decisions, enacted at a later date.¹⁸

In the Qur'ān, only two meanings can be traced. They are:

1. *Suppression*, based on Qur'ān 2:106, *mā nansakh min āyah*, and Qur'ān 22:52, *fayansakh Allāh mā yulqī al-shaitān*.
2. *Transcription*, based on Qur'ān 45:29, *kunnā nastansikh mā kuntum ta'malūn*.¹⁹

The third meaning, *supersession* which is considered the subject matter of the science of *al-Nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh* is

not mentioned in the Qur'ān. It is a technical term used by Islamic scholars to designate a variety of alleged 'phenomena' discussed in the tertiary science of *uṣūl al-fiqh*. The 'phenomena' had a common basis in the concept of 'replacement', introduced to resolve the problems of conflict of sources.²⁰

Therefore, *naskh* has this meaning when used without further qualification, but, in the quite strict sense, that it is God alone, whose prerogative it is to repeal one of his decisions, embodied in one of His revelations, by the provision of another revelation, embodying a quite different decision.... there was not necessarily to be found in the documents, in all such instances, a formal explicit divine announcement of abrogation. Further, by this definition, it will be clear that, the later of the two decisions was invariably considered by the scholars to be the sole legally operative requirement- the *nāsikh*- while the earlier- the *mansūkh*- was regarded as quite void.²¹

Unlike other scholars, Ṭabarī holds that there is no problem with the various meaning of the word '*naskh*' literally because to him the original meaning is to transfer (*naql* and *taḥwīl*) the book, i.e transfer it from one *nuskhah* to another. From this basis he constitutes the idea of *naskh al-hukm ilā ghairih* i.e. to transfer its expression (*‘ibārah*) to another (place).²²

By this meaning, Ṭabarī intends to argue that, there is a similar situation in transferring an enactment (*ḥukm*) or to

change its obligation, even to leave it or to cause it to be forgotten. Thus, the new enactment (*manqūl ilaih*) becomes an obligation.

In contrast to what Tabarī believes, Jeffery holds that copy (transfer the book from one to another) is a secondary meaning of the root.... where the original sense is clear to *remove, tear away* (*evellere*), which original meaning is found in the Qur'ān in ii:100, xxi:51.²³

The later scholars (*muta'akhkhirūn*) differ from what the earlier (*mutaqaddimūn*) believe about the meaning of *naskh*.

To the later scholars, *naskh* means to repeal an enactment (*ḥukm*) which is established by a *naṣṣ* by means of another *naṣṣ* without which, the former might be valid.²⁴ As for *mutaqaddimūn* scholars, they used the term *naskh* in many senses such as *takhsīṣ*, *istithnā'*, and *aḥwāl al-mushkilah*, because all these words contain the original sense, i.e. *izālah al-ḥukm al-mutaqaddam*.²⁵

Hence, it is clear that, the earlier scholars used the term *naskh* in a loose and broad sense, whereas the later scholars (*muta'akhkhirūn*) made it specific to repeal a certain enactment.

Let us now see certain examples of the usage of this term among the earlier scholars (*mutaqaddimūn*) i.e. the companions and the successors. Though as we have said before, some of them used the term *naskh* as removal (*izālah*), there are some others who used different words to

show the meaning of *naskh*. For example, Qur'ān 58:12-13, we read: "O ye who believe! when ye hold conference with the messenger, offer an alms before your conference. That is better and purer for you. But if ye cannot find (the wherewithal) then lo! Allāh is forgiving, merciful. Fear ye to offer alms before your conference? Then, when ye do it not and Allāh hath forgiven you, establish worship and pay the poor-due and obey Allāh and His messenger. And Allāh is Aware of what ye do".

If we look carefully into these verses we could deduce the *naskh* matter easily. The phrase which makes an alms (*sadaqah najwā*) obligatory is "offer an alms before your conference" and the alleged *nāsikh* verse is "Allāh hath forgiven you" where the meaning of *mansūkh* here is pictured with the word '*tawbah*'.

According to Ibn 'Abbās, Qur'ān 58:12 was revealed because at one time there were a lot of people surrounding the Prophet and asking him many questions. Subsequently with the revelation of this verse their number decreased. Then, Allah has made a *takhfif* on them with the revelation of Qur'ān 58:13.²⁶

To show the meaning of *naskh* here Ibn 'Abbās used the word *takhfif*.

This event was further explained by 'Alī when he said, "there is a verse of the Qur'ān which none practised before and after me. It is *āyah najwā* (he recited the verse). At that time I had a *dīnār* which I changed into ten dirhams.

Every time I make a conference with the Prophet, I offer a *sadaqah* until I finished it. Then, this *ayah* was abrogated by *ayah* 'a *ashfaqtum an tuqaddimū baina yadai najwā kum sadaqāt*' and it was no longer practised.²⁷

Another word for *naskh* is '*bayān mujmal*'. In Qur'ān 8:1, we read; "They ask thee (O Muhammad) of the spoils of war. Say: The spoils of war belong to Allāh and the messenger, so keep your duty to Allāh, and adjust the matter of your difference, and obey Allāh and his messenger, if ye are (true) believers."

In this verse, the way to divide the booty or spoils of war is not explained in detail. What the verse states is that the spoils of war belong to Allāh and His messenger, which means that the way to divide them is laid upon the explanations from Allāh and His messenger.

Qur'ān 8:41 endorses this situation, which says: "And know that whatever ye take as spoils of war, lo! a fifth thereof is for Allāh, and for the messenger and for the kinsman (who hath need) and orphans and the needy and the wayfarer."

The first verse is called *mujmal*, whereas verse forty one becomes 'explainer' to verse one (*mubayyin*). In this regard, Ibn 'Abbās said, by "*anfāl*" here is meant the spoils of war (*ghanīmah*)²⁸.

This verse is said to have been abrogated and replaced by the verse forty one.²⁹

In Qur'ān 26:224-227 we read" As for poets, the erring follow them. Hast thou not seen how they stray in every valley, and how they say that which they do not? Save those who believe and do good works, and remember Allah much, and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged."

According to Ibn 'Abbās, Q 26:224 has been repealed by Q 26:227. Al-Mahdawī says, actually what Ibn 'Abbās meant by that is *istithnā'*.³⁰

From the various examples given above, it is clear that the companions used the term *naskh* in the loose sense. This happened because each word which they thought worthy to be explained in the cause of reconciling the contradictory *āyāt*, they might do so. Therefore *naskh* in this instance becomes voluminous.

Naskh: origin, modes and significances.

In chapter five we will discuss the idea that, the message of Islam was presented to the Arabs as something new, and different from their way of life. Therefore, it was introduced in many stages.³¹ Muslim scholars have brought many examples of this particular case. The outstanding case is the process of prohibition of the drinking of wine.³² The Qur'ān has in fact, brought huge changes gradually, to allow the people to adjust themselves to the new order and to avoid them from having great difficulties in order to follow the new commandments led by Muhammad.

This particular method has relationship with this study since gradual imposition of law with adjustment here and there is a part of the theory of *naskh*.

There are three modes of *naskh* which are discussed by Muslims. They are quite unconnected with each other despite the Muslims's habit to treat them as a single topic and each has evolved from its own evidentiary base to supply three distinct needs in separate Islamic sciences.³³

These three modes have never been the universal view of the Muslims.³⁴ However the majority of Muslim scholars agree on the existence of *naskh* in the Qur'ān; though they differ on certain points, especially on the meaning and the modes of *naskh*.³⁵ Among Muslim Scholars only Abū Muslim bin Baḥr³⁶ and his followers believe that *naskh* does not occur in the Qur'ān.³⁷

There are many theories of how this *naskh* came into being. The formulations of these theories are many, far from agreed and the story of their elaboration is a stormy chapter in the history of the Islamic sciences, but the majority of the scholars, Sunni and Shi'ī alike, were finally to accept at least one doctrine in common: that certain verses of our present Qur'ān were revealed in order to supersede the rulings of certain other verses also recorded in our Qur'ān texts: *naskh al-ḥukm dūna al-tilāwah*, i.e. the abrogation of the rulings of the earlier verse, without, however, the removal of its wording.³⁸

Hirschfeld relates this matter to the question of computing the revelations into a book.⁴⁰ According to him, it appears more probable that Muḥammad purposely omitted to compile the revelations, preferring to entrust them to the piety and memory of the faithful. Even he did nothing to ensure such being made though he felt his death approaching.⁴⁰ The main important reason why Muḥammad did not compile the revelation in a book is "Muḥammad's wish to leave himself freedom to alter or suppress verses which became unsuited to changing circumstances."⁴¹

However, for Muslim theologians, all this happened because Allāh, "When giving precepts to certain people, had already made up His mind to abrogate the same after a certain period."⁴²

Suyūṭī believes that this *naskh* had been specially revealed to this *ummah* for the sake of easiness and facilitation.⁴³

Others suggest that this maxim is a type of education laid down by Allāh on people.⁴⁴

There is also a suggestion that this maxim was an endorsement from Allāh of Muḥammad's practices. It was said that Muḥammad was slandered by Jewish people over these practices. God was said to have endorsed his practice by revealing the Qur'ān 2:106.⁴⁵

Now we are going to examine why and how the theory of *naskh* originated and look into several examples as expressed by the scholars.

The origin of the theory of naskh.

The theory of *naskh* is originated from *ikhtilāf al-tafsīr* of Muslim scholars over the words *nansakh* and *nunsi hā* in *sūrah al-Baqarah* (2):106; *mā nansakh^a min āyah aw nunsi hā...*

The words *nansakh* and *nunsi* become subject of dispute among Muslim scholars. Due to their variant readings, different meanings are inferred. Some scholars read *mā nansakh min āyah* ⁴⁶ as *mā nunsikh min āyah*. The word *aw nunsi hā* has more variant readings. The variants, apart from *aw nunsi hā* which bears either two meanings "We cause it to be forgotten" or "We leave it and We do not replace it"⁴⁷ are *aw tunsa hā* which means "you are caused to forget", *aw nansa' hā* which means "We postpone it" and *aw tansa hā* which means "you forget it".

The reading *aw tunsa hā* is attributed to Sa'd b. Abī Waqas^q. He based the reading on *sūrah al-a'la* (87):6; *sa nuqri'uka fa lā tansā* and *sūrah al-Kahf* (18):24, *wa udhkur rabba ka idhā nasīta*.⁴⁸

Among the various meanings given for *nansakh* is to suppress, withdraw or remove. This meaning is actually inferred from *sūrah al-Nahl* (22):52; *fa yansakh Allāh mā yulqi al-shaitān fī umniyyatih...* where the word *naskh* (*fa yansakh*) bears the meaning of total rejection or complete suppression of that satanic matter from Muhammad's longing.

The words *nansakh* and *nunsi* are obviously synonymous in this sense.⁴⁹

The complete suppression or the total removal of certain verses from the Qur'ān text give rise to the first mode of abrogation of the Qur'ān namely *naskh al-ḥukm wa'l-tilāwah*; the removal of both the ruling and the wording of part of the original text of the revealed Qur'ān. In this contact, the "verse" has simply been omitted from the texts to show that the ruling is totally suppressed.

Another meaning of this word is supersession or replacement.

This meaning forms the subject matter of the science of *al-nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh*, to which a great number of works has been devoted.⁵⁰ This meaning cannot actually be found in the Qur'ān. It is used by Muslim scholars to designate the third mode of abrogation of the Qur'ān; *naskh al-ḥukm dūna al-tilāwah*, i.e. the abrogation of the rulings of the earlier verse, without, however, the removal of its wording. In this case, any *āyah* which was revealed earlier was replaced by the later but, the wording of the earlier had not been omitted from the text.

To prove the supersession meaning, Muslim scholars relied upon Qur'ān 2:106, in association with *sūrah al-naḥl* (16):101; *wa idhā baddalnā āyah makān āyah*, since Qur'ān 16 bears the actual meaning of replacement. Thus *nansakh* here was interpreted as *nubaddil* (from *tabdīl*; replacement)⁵¹, whether the *tabdīl* is for the *āyah* alone which in this case

may refer also to *mansūkh al-tilāwah* or for both the *āyah* and the *ḥukm* but, the earlier *āyah* still survives in the text. However, the clause *na'ti bi khairin min hā aw mithli hā* gives rise to the thought of "replacement".

The second mode of *naskh* has emerged amid the disputes among the Muslim scholars over certain *fiqh* problems; the minimum number of sucklings required to set up a bar to marriage and the stoning penalty for adultery.

The second mode of *naskh* is *naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-ḥukm*, i.e. the verses are abrogated but not their legal rulings. It means that the wordings are omitted in the Qur'ān text but, validity of the legislative force of its "revealed" contents continues. They are survived outside the text in the form of *ḥadīths*.

This mode of abrogation was established by Shāfi'ī in his endeavour to defend his theory that the Qur'ān had not abrogated the *sunnah*, or the *sunnah* the Qur'ān. No discrepancies between the Qur'ān and the reported sayings or reports of the practice of Prophet Muḥammad. Using this mode of abrogation Shāfi'ī has made himself clear that the alleged abrogated verses in wordings, *khamsun ma'lūmāt* ^a for the suckling and *āyah al-rajm*, *al-shaikh wa'l-shaikhah idhā zanayā fa urjumū humā al-battah* ^b are still valid in their legal rulings though their wordings had been omitted from the text.

Those scholars who accepted the idea that the Qur'ān might abrogate the *sunnah*, or the *sunnah* the Qur'ān felt

themselves to be under no obligation to consider this second mode of abrogation. Their concern was thus with only two alleged Qur'ānic phenomena- the setting aside of the ruling of one verse by that of another where both have survived in the document; and the simple non-survival of both the wording and the ruling of an allegedly revealed element of the original Qur'ān.⁵⁴

As a result their *fiqh* theories are different. Shāfi'ī believes that five suckling caused someone to be barred from marriage. The rest go against him.⁵⁵

Tabari perceives the problem of variations in reading. Thus, he says that the variant readings of Qur'ān 2:106 are void. The reading *mā nunsikh* instead of *mā nansakh* as well as *aw tunsa hā*, *aw nansa' hā* and *aw tansa hā* instead of *aw nunsī hā* are all isolated reading (*shādhid*).⁵⁶ However, Rāzī considers that the variant reading; *mā nunsikh* is not isolated since it is the *qirā'ah* of Ibn 'Amir. He also regards the variant reading; *aw nansa' hā* as valid since it is the *qirā'ah* of Ibn Kathīr and Abū 'Amr.⁵⁷

As the *naskh* matter involves legal verses only, we notice that its definition and usage radiate around legal texts. In the course of *fuqahā'* endeavours to defend and to strengthen their legal doctrines, there emerged a need to document them by reviewing them in the light of what had been accepted as the Islamic foundations, the Qur'ān and the sunnah. In pursuit of this need the *fuqahā'* were confronted with instances of conflict between the sources. In certain

cases, the conflicts are impossible to be conflated but one has to be repudiated. It is here where the *naskh* theory plays the very important role for the *fuqahā'*. Shāfi'ī was brilliant enough to use the theory of *naskh* in defending his *fiqh* doctrines.

Modes of *naskh*.

As we have mentioned before, scholars have divided *naskh* into three kinds. They are as follows:

1. Abrogation of the recited verses together with the legal ruling. (*naskh al-tilāwah wa'l-hukm*).
2. Abrogation of the recited verses without its legal ruling. (*naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-hukm*).
3. Abrogation of the legal ruling without the recited verses. (*naskh al-hukm dūna al-tilāwah*)

1. Abrogation of the recited verses together with the legal ruling (*naskh al-tilāwah wa'l-hukm*).

We do not have much to say on this type of *naskh*. The removal of both the wording and the ruling of the original text of the revealed Qur'ān does not have much material to be presented. In this phenomenon the verses of the Qur'ān are said to be omitted from the original texts.

In this regard we see the scholars discuss the outstanding examples which are familiar to them as if they are not omitted from the text. The definition of the minimum

number of sucklings required to set up a bar to marriage has become a dispute among scholars.

Muslim has narrated a tradition concerning this matter:

"¹Āishah (Allāh be pleased with her) reported that it had been revealed in the Holy Qur'ān that ten clear sucklings make marriage unlawful, then it was abrogated (and replaced) by five sucklings and Allāh's Apostle (may peace be upon him) died and it was before that time (found) in the Holy Qur'ān (and recited by the Muslims).⁵⁸

Concerning this Muslim scholars are of the opinion that the verses regarding suckling were revealed twice. The first was that the bar of marriage occurred after ten sucklings. This enactment, however, was suppressed by the later enactment, that the bar was only after five sucklings.

The first enactment is *naskh al-tilāwah wa'l-ḥukm*. The wordings and ruling are no longer applied. The second enactment, i.e. five sucklings is *naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-ḥukm*, where the ruling, five sucklings, according to Shāfi'ī is still embodied in Islamic law, but the wordings are eliminated from the text.⁵⁹

In this case we see that in both phenomena, *naskh al-tilāwah wa'l-ḥukm* and *naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-ḥukm*, the

wordings were suppressed and both were eliminated from the Qur'ān text. But, the former, the ruling is no longer applicable. The latter, the applicability of the ruling becomes a subject of dispute among Islamic scholars. Shāfi'ī believes that, the ruling is still enforceable. Others hold the other way around.

We are now doubtful whether these verses were formerly in the Qur'ānic text or were merely a tradition. All in all, since the verses are not in the Qur'ān text, we have to make an interim conclusion here that this suckling matter is not based on the verses of the Qur'ān but rather the tradition.

There is another example of the case where both the ruling and the wording were suppressed from the Qur'ān.

It is said that *sūrah al-Aḥzāb* (33) used to be amongst *sab'ah al-ṭiwāl*. Then it was reduced.⁶⁰ Suyūṭī narrates the saying of 'Ā'ishah who said that this *sūrah* used to be read in two hundred verses in the time of the Prophet. When 'Uthman compiled the *maṣāḥif*, he could not find the verses except what are present today.⁶¹

He says further that there was a saying ascribed to Ubai that he said this *sūrah* was equal to *sūrah al-Baqarah* and that therein they had read verses regarding the stoning penalty.⁶²

Zarkashī says that there is a ḥadīth ascribed to Ubai that *sūrah al-Aḥzāb* was similar to *sūrah al-Nūr* and that

the stoning penalty was therein.⁶³ There is a narration ascribed to Ibn 'Umar that he said:

"Let none of you say, 'I have got the whole of the Qur'an.' How does he know what all of it is? Much of the Qur'ān has gone. Let him say instead, 'I have got what has survived.'⁶⁴

Ibn 'Umar means the text which is in our hand today does not contain the whole revelations because some of them had not survived.

2. Abrogation of the recited verses without the legal ruling (naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-hukm).

This means the non-survival in our text of an original Qur'ān wording, with, however, the continuing validity of the legislative force of its 'revealed' contents.⁶⁵ These verses were suppressed in the wording but although they are no longer stated in the text, they are authoritative in practice.

There are many instances reported to us, for example:

1. As we have mentioned earlier in the case of determining the minimum number of sucklings required to set up a bar to marriage, it was said that ten sucklings was the first bar to marriage. This ruling was later suppressed by the ruling of five sucklings. However, the five

sucklings was no longer stated in the Qur'ān text, Thus, the scholars say that in the case of ten sucklings, both the ruling and the wording were suppressed. In the later, the suppression was in the wording but not in the ruling.⁶⁶

In this connection Suyūṭī comments that the wording of the five suckling verses should be in the Qur'ān text because there is a phrase in the tradition which says, "*wa hunna min mā yuqra'*", which means that five suckling verses are among the recited verses, but, the case is not like that ⁶⁷ because the verses are no longer there.

In this case we see that Suyūṭī feels strange about how the verses of five sucklings are no longer in the Qur'ān whereas it should be there because these verses were recited during the lifetime of the Prophet until he died. Here the cause might be any of these three factors:

1. That particular ḥadīth was a fabrication, or
2. The Qur'ān which is in our hand today is incomplete, or
3. It was not to the 'Āishah knowledge that the suckling verse had been abrogated twice; one for the ten sucklings and the other the five sucklings.

The third seems to be the least annoying to the Muslims. Thus, Shāfi'ī believes that the wording of this particular verse had been abrogated but the enactment is not dead. However, many other scholars believe that it is not a verse of the Qur'ān but rather a ḥadīth. Therefore, their rulings are different from Shāfi'ī.

However, Suyūṭī says that, there was an argument that what ʿĀishah meant was probably the Prophet was about to die when the verses were abrogated, or at the time the verses were abrogated not all people knew the abrogation until after he died. Therefore, some people read it even after the death of the Prophet.⁶⁸

In this regard, scholars create a maxim that the abrogator (*nāsikh*) could be sometimes abrogated.⁶⁹

Nawawī says that only Shāfiʿī and his followers apply this abrogated wording in their *fiqh*, that is five sucklings cause someone to be barred from marriage. The majority hold that by only one suckling, someone is barred from marriage. They argue that Qurʾān 4:23, does not mention any number of sucklings. They take for granted that any number of sucklings, even one, might cause someone to be barred from marriage. Among them were ʿAlī, Ibn Masʿūd, Ibn ʿAbbās, Zuhri, Mālik and Abū Ḥanīfah. Abū Thawr, Abū ʿUbaid, Ibn Mundhir and Dāud believe that three sucklings may cause someone to be barred from marriage.⁷⁰

The majority argue that the ḥadīth is not to be relied on because it was narrated by a single person (*ḥabār āḥād*) and the Qurʾānic verses could not be justified by *ḥabār āḥād* (*al-Qurʾān lā yathbut bi ḥabār al-waḥīd*).⁷¹

This ḥadīth is to be opposed on the grounds that if the verses were the recitable Qurʾān, the knowledge of it would not be exclusive to ʿĀishah. There must be somebody else

who knew the report and it might well be practised by the people, especially the successors of the Prophet.

Ḥammūdah has made a comparison in the *riwāyāt* of the ḥadīth, in Muslim, Tirmidhī and ibn Mājah. Apparently the *riwāyāt* are very much different from each other.⁷²

The *riwāyāt* of this ḥadīth are contradictory to each other. Some *riwāyāt* show that the wording is not dead, whereas some others show that it has been abrogated. In some versions, the enactment of ten and five sucklings were revealed all at once while in other versions the "ten sucklings" was revealed earlier. After people had practised this enactment for some time, the five sucklings verse was revealed to abrogate what was more than that (ten sucklings).

Thus, we can make an interim conclusion here that this ḥadīth is not reliable and the verse is not Qur'ānic (word).

In the second instance, it was said that a group of the Prophet's companions, most of them the Qur'ānic reciters (*Qurra'*), were killed at Bi'r Ma'ūnah ⁷³, fourteen months after the Battle of Uhud.⁷⁴

Anas reported that Allāh had revealed a verse of the Qur'ān for this misfortune.⁷⁵ The verse was,

"Inform our people that we had met our Lord. He is pleased with us and we are satisfied with Him".

Anas said this verse was abrogated after some time.

This report was transmitted in many contradictory versions.

What is reported by Bukhārī ⁷⁶ was contradictory to what has been reported by Muslim as mentioned above.

There are many other versions narrated by other transmitters which are different from both Bukhārī and Muslim's versions. ⁷⁷ Hammūdah thus, after demonstrating many contradictory examples, believes that, this verse is no less than mere *ḥadīth* (reported with the meaning) and it is in no way a Qur'ānic verse. ⁷⁸

To conclude, this *ḥadīth* is also not reliable.

For the third instance, we come to many reports attributed to many companions. Among them are as follows: ⁷⁹

Abū Mūsā al-Ashārī said that, "there was a *sūrah* in the Qur'ān similar to *Sūrah al-Barā'ah* in its length which was caused to be forgotten except one verse ' Did ibn Ādam possess two *wādīs* of property, he would desire a third. Nothing will fill the maw of ibn Ādam but dust' ".
Anas reports, 'the messenger of Allāh said, "Did Ibn Ādam possess two *wādīs* of property, he would desire a third. Nothing will fill the maw of ibn Ādam but

dust, but God will relent to him who repents."

In another version Anas is said to have reported, "Did ibn Ādam possess a *wādī* of gold he would crave another one. Nothing will fill his mouth but dust, and God will relent to him who repents."

Ibn ʿAbbās reports, "I heard the Messenger of Allāh says, 'Did ibn Ādam possess a *wādī* of pelf, he would crave another one similar to that. Nothing will fill the maw of ibn Ādam save dust. God relents to him who repents.'" Ibn ʿAbbās said, "I don't know whether it is a part of the Qur'ān or it is not."

All the above-mentioned versions are quoted from Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim. We find that in Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim alone, there are about four contradictory versions regarding this matter. If this thing is really a verse of the Qur'ān, revealed to Muhammad and memorized by people, it would not be transmitted in such contradictory wording that caused people to be doubtful. What more if we take into consideration, the language and the style.

Ibn ʿAbbās made a remark on this, that he was not sure whether this verse is a part of the Qur'ān or not.⁸⁰ Qatādah

was also in doubt whether this phrase was something revealed or one of Muḥammad's sayings.⁸¹

In another case, it was said that there had been a verse concerning the stoning penalty in the Qur'ān.⁸² 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās reported that 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb sat on the pulpit of Allāh's messenger (may peace be upon him) and said:

Verily Allāh sent Muḥammad (may peace be upon him) with truth and he sent down the book upon him, and the verse of stoning was included in what was sent down to him. We recited it, retained it in our memory and understood it. Allāh's messenger (may peace be upon him) awarded the punishment of stoning to death (to the married adulterer and adulteress) and after him, we also awarded the punishment of stoning. I am afraid that with the lapse of time, the people (may forget it) and may say: We do not find the punishment of stoning in the book of Allāh, and thus go astray by abandoning this duty prescribed by Allāh. Stoning is a duty laid down in Allāh's book for married men and women who commit adultery when proof is established, or if there is pregnancy or a confession.⁸³

This is an outstanding and well-known example of this type of *naskh*. J. Burton has a lot to say on this matter. He has made a thorough study of this *ḥadīth*.

From his point of view, this topic is exceedingly complex. This penalty is not only nowhere mentioned in the Qur'ān texts, it is totally incompatible with the penalty that is mentioned; i.e. Qur'ān 24:2 which we read: *al-zāniyatu wa'l-zāni fajlidū kulla wāhidin minhumā mi'ata jaldatin*.

He says:⁸⁴

"Noting that this verse fails to distinguish between adultery and fornication, since the root employed, *zny*, is interpreted rather in the sense of sexual misconduct, the scholars further assert that it apparently clashes with another verse of the Qur'ān which they also take to be a reference to the revealed penalty for the sexual misconduct of married women," i.e. Qur'ān 4:15 and 16.

Q 4:15 was traditionally read as a reference to adultery because its penalty seems to be 'heavier' as compared to the verse 16 which was presumed to be the lighter penalty. Therefore, the penalty of verse 16 was construed as referring to fornication between unmarried partners.⁸⁵

However, their penalty had been overtaken and superseded by the flogging of Qur'ān 24:2. In fiqh, Qur'ān 24:2, applies exclusively to free unmarried persons guilty of sexual misconduct.

Within these limits, he says that Qur'ān 24:2 abrogated (i.e. replaced) Qur'ān 4:16. This is an instance of *naskh al-ḥukm dūna al-tilāwah*.

Qur'ān 4:15 is an example of what Shāfi'ī had called nasa'--the postponement of a revelation until a later time, with the revelation of an interim regulation in the meantime.

There are many variant versions of tradition ⁶⁶ which are said to have abrogated the ruling of Qur'ān 4:15.

Muslim reports in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*: ⁶⁷

The Prophet said, "Take it from me! take it from me! God has now appointed a way for women: the virgin with the virgin, one hundred strokes and a year's banishment; the non-virgin with the non-virgin, one hundred strokes and stoning."

Stoning was therefore, established by the sunnah. Based on this, it was said that, 'Alī had flogged a woman guilty of adultery and later on stoned her. When someone protested he said that "he stoned her in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet and flogged her in accordance with the book of God." The sunnah has stated that the non-virgin has also to be

flogged with one hundred strokes, similar to what has been said in the Qur'ān. According to ḥadīth ^{Umar} (see note 83) the stoning penalty is said to have been established by the Qur'ān. If this is the case, why did ^{Ali} not mention this *āyah* then, instead, he said that he excised the stoning penalty based on the sunnah of the Prophet.

In another version Muslim reports that:

The descent of inspiration (wahy) was troublesome to the Prophet. His face would go ashen in colour. One day inspiration came down upon him and he showed the usual signs of distress. When he recovered, he said, "Take it from me! God has appointed a way for the women: the non-virgin with the non-virgin and the virgin with the virgin. The non-virgin, one hundred strokes and death by stoning; the virgin, one hundred strokes and banishment for a year."^{ee}

According to this ḥadīth the stoning penalty had been established by God through *wahy* and not by the Prophet. If this is the case, it is contradictory to what ^{Ali} said above, that he stoned the woman in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet. If this is the case, the stoning penalty which is not mentioned anywhere in the Qur'ān has the same level of authority with the flogging penalty which

is introduced by the Q24:2 because the same way the Prophet received the stoning hadith was just like he received any Qur'ānic verse (please refer chapter five on how the Qur'ān was revealed). No wonder, ibn Hazm believes that the Qur'ān and the sunnah are similar in authority. Thus, they can abrogate each other.⁸⁹ Is it true? If it is, 'Alī appears to be wrong. If 'Alī was right, the above-mentioned ḥadīth is questionable. Almost all Muslim scholars believe that sunnah is the second source of Islamic law after the Qur'ān.

In another version:

"The virgin is to be flogged and banished and the non-virgin is to be flogged and stoned."

Here the amount of lashes is not mentioned nor the period of banishment.

In many ḥadīths concerning the punishment which was incurred by Mā'iz b. Mālik, the flogging penalty was not mentioned. According to the ḥadīths he had been stoned only. Similarly, a woman from Ghāmid had been stoned and there was no flogging penalty incurred by her.⁹⁰

Here it seems the above-mentioned ḥadīths had been ignored. In this regard, it was said that they were abrogated by Mā'iz's and Ghāmidīyyah's punishment.⁹¹

Nawawī says that there was an *ijmā'* that the virgin is to be flogged one hundred strokes and the non-virgin is to be stoned only.⁹² No double punishment is supposed to be

implemented in either case. The stoning penalty alone for the non-virgin thus, is an *ijmā'*.

There is uncertainty over the source of the stoning penalty. In the view of *uṣūlīs*, it had derived from the Prophet Muhammad. Muhammad had stoned either to establish his sunnah, or to implement the rulings of the Book of God.

If the former were the case, the sunnah had incontrovertibly abrogated the Qur'ān ruling, for all we find there is a flogging penalty introduced in Q 24:2. If the latter were the case, a very crucial question for *uṣūl al-fiqh* arises.³³

The only way to solve this contradictory matter is to establish *naskh* without which, Burton's remark would become true.

3. Abrogation of the legal ruling without the recited verses (*naskh al-hukm dūna al-tilāwah*).

There is only one Qur'ān in our hands today. Does it contain any contradiction among the verses? This is the question we should deal with in this type of abrogation.

The idea about *naskh* actually should be focused³ on this kind which many books were written on.³⁴ Almost all Hibat Allāh writes in his book, *al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh* is about *naskh* in the present Qur'ān.

To Muslims, the Qur'ān must be free of contradiction. Suyūṭī has done a lot in his *Itqān* to show that there is no contradiction in the Qur'ān. He has demonstrated this view

under several sub-titles in this book such as "*al-Muḥkam wa'l-Mutashābih*", "*al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh*" "*al-Muṭlaq wa'l-Muqayyad*", "*al-Ḥaqīqah wa'l-Majāz*", "*al-ʿĀmm wa'l-khaṣṣ*" and so on.

By these methods he solves every case of contradiction and ^{has} called the variation "apparent". Thus, for example, he dismisses the contradiction of Q 7:28 and 17:16 by distinguishing between the ethical command in the former, and the (cosmic) causative command in the latter.⁹⁵

Only in the case of *naskh* he admits that there are contradictions. However, he has done a lot to conflate theories of *naskh* by many scholars. He has reduced a great number of verses which are said to be under the heading of *naskh*.

When we deal with *naskh al-tilāwah wa'l-ḥukm*, there is no problem, since we do not have either the abrogator or the abrogated, because both are outside of the Qur'ān. In the case of *naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-ḥukm* the abrogated verses are outside the Qur'ān and still survive in traditions and records of Qur'ānic exegesis. But, when we come to the *naskh al-ḥukm dūna al-tilāwah*; that the application of the ruling was withdrawn but the wordings are still kept in the text, the problem starts.

Hibat Allāh has named forty *sūrahs* which contain abrogated verses, twenty five *sūrahs* contain abrogator and abrogated verses and six *sūrahs* contain abrogators.⁹⁶ Hundreds of verses are said to be involved in *naskh*.

However, if we look into the matter, Hibat Allāh does not differentiate between the real *naskh* and others which seems to be *naskh* but are not really *naskh* such as, *mutlaq*, *'āmm*, *mujmal* and *istithnā'*.

Of the many contradictory verses Suyūṭī reduced their number to twenty one, but he does not make clear whether the twenty one cases are actual cases of abrogation. To him, the twenty one verses are cases in which abrogation may be correctly claimed.⁹⁷ In this case Suyūṭī has doubted the validity of the twenty one verses which are said to be real cases of abrogation.⁹⁸

Another scholar, Rāzī, the author of *al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr*, considered only five verses which have been abrogated.⁹⁹ However, this is not his own claim but he presents this to discuss the claim of Abū Muslim b. Baḥr that there is no abrogation at all in the Qur'ān, which he criticized. Of this he rejected three and recognized two; i.e. the change of *qiblah* and the ratio to overwhelm the enemy in Q 8:65.

Actually, he himself inclined to say that there is no abrogation in the Qur'ān. The "*mā*" in the verse "*mā nansakh min āyah*" does not mean that there must be abrogated verses in the Qur'ān because it implies *al-shart wa'l-jazā'*. Just like one says "whoever comes, welcome him". It does not mean that the thing must occur but "if" in case someone comes, then, treat him well.¹⁰⁰

Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dahlawī, the author of *al-Fawz al-kabīr fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*, the Qur'ān scholar from India, has

also repudiated many of the claims of abrogation.¹⁰¹ He repudiates Suyūṭī's twenty one except five verses in which he finds abrogation inescapable. The verses he accepts as being abrogated are five,¹⁰² Qur'ān 2:180, 2:240, 8:65, 33:52 and 58:12.

To conclude, the concept of *naskh* is accepted by the majority of Muslims scholars, although they may differ in certain aspects. The retention of the recitation, with abrogation of the ordinance, is a difficulty for Muslims scholars. "The fact that these abrogated verses have been retained in the Qur'ān as it has come down to us , affords a strong presumption that no attempt was made to adapt it to any preconceived ideas".¹⁰³

The scholars try to apply the provisions of the Qur'ān into their theories. However, it was difficult sometimes because their doctrines could not be harmonised directly with the external meaning of the Qur'ān. Thus, attempts were made to adjust the Qur'ānic texts to the doctrines, because the adjustment had to be made to meet the need to document the doctrines. In the course of such adjustment the theory of *al-nāsikh wa'l-mansūkh* came into being.

However, what ^{the} Qur'ān says, "Will they not then ponder on the Qur'ān? If it had been from other than Allāh they would have found therein much incongruity",¹⁰⁴ brings us to an idea that there are certain *āyāt* in the Qur'ān which seem to contradict each other.

Footnotes

Chapter four

1. *Nāsikhāt* are verses to abrogate other verses.
2. *Mansūkhāt* are verses to be abrogated.
3. *Muhkamāt* is said to be the verses of the Qur'ān which are to be believed and practised (*yu'man bihī wa yu'mal bihī*). This saying is ascribed to Ibn 'Abbās. See Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Qurṭubī, *al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyah, 1957), 4:10.
4. According to Ibn 'Abbās, *mutashābihāt* are the verses of the Qur'ān which are to be believed but not to be practised (*yu'man bihī wa lā yu'mal bihī*). Qurṭubī, *Jāmi'*, 4:10. However, this term has become a matter of dispute among the scholars because each and every one has defined it according to what he feels suitable.
5. *ibid.*
6. *Ibid.* See also Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr*, 1:345.
7. Qurṭubī, *Jāmi'*, 4:11.
8. Hibat Allāh b. Salāmah, *al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh* (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1967), p.4. In the same regard, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah says in his book *I'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn 'an Rabb al-'Ālamīn*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥy al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (Cairo: Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah al-Kubrā, 1955), 1:35.

However, he excludes one of the persons supposed to

Speak in public, that is a person who has been appointed by the *Amīr*.

9. *halakta wa ahlakta*.
10. Hibat Allāh, *Nāsikh*, p. 4. It was said that Ibn ʿUmar and Ibn ʿAbbās had also advised another person on this particular matter. Suyūṭī reports that ʿAlī's advice was towards a *qāṣṣ* (story teller) without mentioning his name. See *Itqān*, 3:66.
11. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 2:29. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:66. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 2:71. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:226.
12. Shāh Walī Allāh Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Rahīm al-Dihlawī, *al-Fawz al-Kabīr fī Usūl al-Tafsīr* (Karachi: Nūr Muḥammad, 1960), pp. 22 and 56.
13. Yufnī ʿumran kathīran. *Fawz Kabīr*, p. 56
14. Hibat Allāh, *Nāsikh Mansūkh*, p. 4.
Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Mūsā al-Hamadhānī, *K. al-Iʿtibār fī Bayān al-Nāsikh wa'l-Mansūkh min al-Āthār* (Haidrabad: Dā'irah al-Maʿārif, 1359 H), pp. 4-5.
15. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 2:29.
16. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 2:72.
Subhī Sālih, *ʿUlūm Qur'ān*, p. 261
17. Zurqānī, *Manāhil*, 2:72.
18. J. Burton, *al-Nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh*, Ph.D Thesis, University of London, October 1969, p. 40.
19. Idem, Abū ʿUbaid al-Qāsim b. Sallām's *K. al-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh* (Cambridge: E.J.W Gibb Memorial Trust, 1987) p.1.

20. Ibid.
21. Burton, *Nāsikh Mansūkh*. pp. 40-42.
22. Tabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:475.
23. A. Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān*
(Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1938) p. 279.
24. Ibn Bārīzī, *Nāsikh al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīz wa mansūkhīh*
(Beirut: Muassasah al-Risālah, 1983), p. 59.
25. Ibid.
26. Qurtubī: *Tafsīr*, 17:301.
27. ʿAlī al-Muttaqī ʿAla Uddīn, *Kanz al-ʿUmmāl fī Sunan
al-Aqwāl wa'l-afʿāl* (Hyderabad: Majlis Dā'irah al-
Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniyah, 1950), 2:329.
28. Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *al-Durr al-Manthūr fī al-Tafsīr
bil-Ma'thūr* (Beirut; Dār al-Maʿrifah, n.d) 3:160.
29. Ibid. p.16.
30. Qurtubī, *Tafsīr*, 13:153.
31. Qur'ān 17:106. *Wa Qur'ānan faraqnā hu li taqra'a hū
ʿala al-nās ʿalā mukthīn...*
32. Qur'ān 4:43, 2:219, 5:93-94
33. Burton, *collection*, p.46.
34. Ibid, quoting M. Zaid's *al-naskh fi al-Qur'ān al-Karīm*,
vol 1, pp 284-285.
35. Ibn Ḥazm, *al-Ihkām fī Usūl al-Ahkām*, p. 440-441.
Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:229.
36. Abū Muslim b. Bīhr is well known by Abū Muslim
al-Isfihānī. He is a *Mūʿtazilī*. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:229
Hairschfeld, *New Researches into the Composition and*

Exegesis of the Qoran (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902), p. 7.

37. Rāzī, *Tafsīr* 3:229.
38. Burton, *Cranes*, p. 249.
39. Hirschfeld, *New Research*, p.5.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid, p.6.
43. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:67. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 2:30.
44. Subḥī Ṣāliḥ, *ʿUlūm Qurʾān*, p. 259.
45. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:226.
46. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:478.
47. ibid. pp. 476-477.
48. ibid.
49. Burton, *Cranes*, p. 260.
50. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:71. Burton, *Abū ʿUбайд*, p. 1.
51. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:475. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:231.
52. Nawawī, *Sharḥ*, 10:29. K. al-Radāʿ.
53. ibid. 11:191.
54. Burton, *Cranes*, p. 251. Ṭabarī is to be reckoned one of them.
55. Nawawī, *Sharḥ*, 10:29.
56. Ṭabarī, *Tafsīr*, 1:478.
57. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:226
58. *Muslim*, kitāb al-Radāʿ.
59. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:230.
60. ibid.

61. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:82.
62. Ibid.
63. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 2:35.
64. Ibid. 43:81-82.

All examples given by Suyūṭī are classified by him under *naskh al-tilāwah dūna al-hukm*. Looking into the matter, we could say that he deliberately categorised them under this title because he would like to suggest that some of the suppressed verses are still existent in practice, that is their ruling is still applicable although the wordings are no longer exist. This idea is very obvious when he start talking about the verse of stoning penalty to the married person or used to be married but having illegal sexual intercourses (*al-shaikh and al-shaikhah*).

65. Burton, *cranes*, p.251.
66. In *Burhān*, 2:39, it was read '*wa hiya min mā yuqra*.'
In *Muslim bi Sharh Nawawī*, '*wa hunna fī mā yuqra*'.
67. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:70.
68. *ibid*. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 2:39.
69. Zarkashī, *Burhān*, 2:31.

Other examples are Qur'ān 109:6 which was abrogated by Qur'ān 9:5 and Qur'ān 9:5 by Qur'ān 9:29. Qur'ān 2:109 was abrogated by Qur'ān 9:5 and Qur'ān 9:5 by Qur'ān 9:29.

70. Nawawī, *Sharh*, 10:29.

71. *ibid.* p. 30.

72. Hammūdah, *Qirā'āt wa Lahajāt*, p. 86.

73. Bi'r Ma'ūnah was a place between the territory of Banū 'Āmir and Banū Sulaim. It was nearer to Banū Sulaim.

This place was in the area of Najd.

Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *Uyūn al-Athar*, 2:61

Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah al-Nabiyy*, 3:184-185.

74. According to Ibn Hishām, 3:185, there were about forty companions sent by the Prophet.

In *Uyūn al-Athar*, 2:61, Ibn Sayyid al-Nās

narrates that there were two versions on the

number of companions, either forty or seventy

of them. All the companions who were sent to preach

Islam except two were killed in there. The only

survivors were said to be Ka'b b. Zaid and

'Amr b. Umayyah. Because of this incident,

the Prophet was said to be in the saddest ever

situation since his life.

Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah al-Nabiyy*, 3:185-186.

Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *Uyūn al-Athar*, 2:61-66.

75. Muslim, K. al-Masjid, bāb istiḥbāb qunūt.

76. Bukhārī, K. Jihād.

77. Hammūdah, *Qirā'āt wa Lahajāt*, p. 81.

78. *ibid.*

79. Muslim, K. Zakāh, bāb karāhah al-ḥarṣ' alā al-dunyā.

Translation, see Burton, *Collection*, p. 82-83.

80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. Suyūṭī brings the report that this
verse might be a part of *Sūrah al-Ahzāb* (33).
Itqān, 3:82, whereas Zarkashi brings some other
report saying that this verse might be
a verse of *Sūrah al-Nūr* (24). *Burhān*, 2:35.
83. Muslim, K. *Hudūd* bāb *had al-Zinā*.
84. Burton, *Collection*, p. 72.
85. *ibid.* pp. 72-73.
86. *ibid.* pp. 74-75.
87. Muslim, K. *Hudūd*, bāb *Hadd al-Zinā*.
(for the translation, see Burton, *Collection*, p. 74.)
88. *ibid.*
89. Ibn Ḥazm, *Ihkām*, 1:477.
90. *ibid.*
91. *ibid.*, 11:189.
92. *ibid.*
93. Burton, *Collection*, p. 71.
94. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:71.
95. *ibid.*, p. 95.
96. Hibat Allāh, *Nāsikh wa Mansūkh*, pp. 7-8.
97. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 3:73-76.
98. *ibid.* p. 77.
99. Rāzī, *Tafsīr*, 3:229-230.
100. *ibid.* p. 229.
101. Dahlawī, *al-Fawz al-Kabīr*, p. 22.

102. *ibid.*, pp. 23-27.

103. Bell, *Introduction to The Qur'ān*, p. 99.

104. *Nisā'* (4):82.

Chapter 5

The Method of Teaching of and in the Qur'ān

The method of teaching of and in the Qur'ān.

The aims of education.

Before we turn to the matter proper, that is the methods of teaching the Qur'ān, it would be fruitful to have a look into the aims of education in Islam. This is due to the fact that teaching-learning the Qur'ān is part and parcel of the Islamic educational system .

In western education, one finds several different concepts of the general aim of education such as education for life, for leisure, for social efficiency and for democratic citizenship. '

In Islamic education, the general aim is to build up the individual who will act as Allāh's *Khalīfah* or at least to put him on the path that leads to such an end.² The Qur'ān has endorsed this aim in surah 51:56, saying "I have created Jinns and men, only that they may serve me."

The concept of serving (*ʿIbādah*) means to be obedient to God and act according to what He enjoins. E. W. Putney concludes that the chief aim of Moslem education is "to obtain knowledge of the religion of Muḥammad".³ He means by this that to be obedient is to follow what Muḥammad has taught. He further says "anything beyond that is superfluous and dangerous."⁴

The concept of the knowledge of the religion of Muḥammad as suggested by Putney is very general and wide. It contains all aspects of the religion. Qābisī¹⁵ has endorsed this idea by saying that the aim of education in Islam is the knowledge of religion (al-dīn), theoretically and practically.¹⁶ He has elaborated this idea when he says, to know the religion one must study, reading and writing, because this will lead to know^{ing} the Qur'ān.¹⁷ Otherwise, he will face difficulties to know the religion.

In general we can say that the aims of education as seen by orthodox Muslim educationists can be classified as follows:¹⁸

1. Religious
2. Intellectual and cultural
3. Utilitarian.

Nammārī Qurtubī says, "Seek knowledge; knowledge is necessary for religious purposes and for intellectual stimulation. It also serves as a companion in solitude, and in company with others it is most useful. It brings riches and fulfils desires".¹⁹

From the Islamic point of view, the most important aim is the religious and spiritual aims. This is what Qābisī says, "*ma'rifah al-dīn*".

To Ghazālī the ultimate aim of education is to lead to god and to eternal happiness in the next world. To him, the knowledge that is most capable of realizing this ultimate aim is theology and other religious studies.²⁰

According to him, other subjects could be studied, but care must be taken that they should not lead the student to (study) undesirable knowledge, that may harm him. He mentions certain subjects as harmful. One is better to be away rather than committed to them. He compared these subjects with bird flesh and delicious sweets some of which are dangerous for some people, especially young babies. ¹¹

Knowledge is very important. Knowledgeable people can manage to avoid harmful things. On this Ghazālī asserts that the doctor, for instance, is better able to resist his desire of eating certain foods which are not good for him than a person who possesses the same amount of inborn wisdom as the doctor and the same intensity of instinctive desire, but who has less knowledge than him. Similarly, a learned man is more able to resist his bad inclination than an ignorant one because of his knowledge. ¹²

The ultimate religious aim is to reach heaven through the gateway of knowledge and righteous living.

Intellectual and cultural aims were not alien to the orthodox Muslim educationists. Ibn Khaldūn for instance, regards the intellectual capacity to a certain degree. He says, "... man belongs to genus of animals and God distinguished him from them by the ability to think, which He gave man and through which man is able to arrange his actions in an orderly manner." ¹³ He believes that "knowledge is the product of thought". ¹⁴

Ghazālī also regards thought highly ¹⁶ because according to him, there are certain things which can be seen by eye sight, and there are some other things which can only be seen by the capacity of intellect. ¹⁶ Therefore, by thinking, one can produce some kind of knowledge. ¹⁷ This is what he calls *taʿallum insānī*. ¹⁸

The utilitarian aim became a subject of dispute among the Muslim orthodox. Some of them condemned it whereas some others allowed this aim to be achieved. However, the utilitarian aim must be accompanied by the other two aims, the religious and the intellectual, for ^{the} utilitarian aim alone may cause damage to people's life.

Knowledge is thus not only pursued for spiritual reward and intellectual enjoyment, but also for the purpose of gaining worldly distinction and material benefit.

We read ^{in the} Qur'ān ¹⁹:

"Allah will exalt those who believe among you, and those who have knowledge, to high ranks. Allāh is informed of what ye do."

This verse explicitly states that people of knowledge will have certain high positions and privileges among people. Of course from the Islamic point of view, these positions and privileges are certainly for them in this world and the world hereafter.

Ibn Sīnā, the great Muslim philosopher of the eleventh century A.D. points to the importance of vocational training in the muslim educational system. ²⁰

Those who memorize the Qur'ān or have the Qur'ānic skill are highly regarded in Islam.²¹ They will be placed together with *al-safarah al-kirām al-bararah*.²² Memorization here does not mean only to recite without text but also to understand it and to have some knowledge of it.

In this regard Kenneth Cragg says : " *hifz* means its prompt availability for guidance or for imagination, not as something to be tediously recalled out of near oblivion. It means further the participation of the believer in the divine speech."²³

Those who read the Qur'ān and do not practise it are disregarded.²⁴ What more if they do not read the Qur'ān at all.

In short, education in Islam satisfied most of the human needs. It provided for the religious tendencies by concentrating on the next world, on punishment and reward. It also provided for the intellectual and emotional needs, by means of various branches of study which stimulated inquiry and satisfied intellectual curiosity. It provided the vocational aim. While modern thinkers differ with regard to the ultimate end, the Muslim ultimate end remains the same among the enlightened section of the community. While the modern educationists are concerned with this world and hardly ever refer to the life hereafter, the Muslim thinkers are primarily concerned with the next life.

Methods of teaching the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān holds the highest place in Islam. For Muslims, the Qur'ān is not only the text of prayers, the instrument of prophecy, the food for the spirit, the favorite canticle of the soul; it is at the same time the fundamental law, the treasure of the sciences, the mirror of the ages. It is the consolation for the present and the hope for the future.²⁵

For them the Qur'ān is the criterion of truth,²⁶ the best model for behaviour,²⁷ and the final judgement in this world.

Muslims from all walks of life have been instigated to study the Qur'ān since its first revelation in the time of the Prophet until today. The teaching will continue so long as the Muslims exist.

The way the Muslims were taught are different from time to time. In the time of the Prophet, we can divide it into two ways. First, the way the Prophet was taught and the other, the way the Prophet taught his companions. It is said that Muhammad had received the first portion of the Qur'ān²⁸ when he was in the cave of Hira'. This portion of the Qur'ān is said to have been revealed to him by the angel Gabriel²⁹.

Muslim reports this account in his *Sahīh*,³⁰ that 'Āishah the mother of the faithful believers narrated: "The commencement of the divine inspiration to Allah's apostle

was in the form of good dreams which came like bright daylight and then the love of seclusion was bestowed upon him.

He used to go in seclusion in the Cave of Hirā', where he used to worship (Allāh alone) continuously for many days regardless of his family. He used to take with him food for the stay and then come back to (his wife) Khadījah to take his food likewise again, till suddenly the truth descended upon him while he was in the Cave of Hirā'.

The angel came to him and asked him to recite. The Prophet replied:

'I do not know how to recite'.

The Prophet added, 'The angel caught me (forcibly) and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me to read and I replied, "I do not know how to recite". Thereupon he caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear any more. He then released me and again asked me to read, but again I replied, "I do not know how to read" (or what shall I recite?). Thereupon he caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said: "Recite, in the name of Your Lord, who created, created man from a clot. Recite!, And Your Lord is the most bountiful".

There are many suggestions of how the Prophet received the revelation.³¹

1. Like the ringing of a bell.³² He grasped what was inspired.

2. The angel came in the form of a man and talked to him and he grasped whatever he said.
3. The angel blew upon him the utterance right into his mind.
4. The angel inspired him in his dream.
5. The Prophet spoke to his God either waking or in his dream. ³³

It would be worthwhile to note that not all the methods mentioned are related to the revelation of the Qur'an. Some may suggest that the Qur'anic verses were revealed only by an angel and not by any other agent. ³⁴

In this regard, Suyūṭī has quoted Juwainī's saying as follows:

"The revealed speech of Allāh is of two kinds: As to the first kind, Allāh says to Gabriel: tell the Prophet to whom I sent you that Allāh tells him to do this and this, and He ordered him something. So Gabriel understood what his Lord had told him. Then he descended with this to the Prophet and told him what His Lord had told him, but the expression is not this (same) expression, just as a king says to someone upon whom he relies: Tell so and so: The king says to you: strive in his service and gather your army for

fighting and when the messenger (goes and) says: The king tells you: do not fail in my service, and do not let the army break up, and call for fighting, etc... then he has not lied nor shortened (the message)....

And as to the other kind, Allāh says to Gabriel: read to the Prophet this piece of writing, and Gabriel descended with it from Allāh, without altering it in the least, just as (if) the king writes a written (instruction) and hands it over to his trustworthy (servant) and says (to him) : read it to so and so".³⁵

Suyūṭī says, the Qur'ān belongs to the second kind, and the first kind is the sunnah, and from this derives the reporting of the sunnah according to the meaning unlike the Qur'ān.³⁶

The Encyclopaedia of Islam says it is not certain who was the agent of the revelation. The Qur'ān does not refer to a specific angel to carry out this task. The Qur'ān only gives some clues that the revelation agent was Gabriel.³⁷

However, if we take several āyāt into account, we feel content to say that the agent was Gabriel.

The verses are Qur'ān 2:97-98, 26:193-194 and 16:2.

We read Q 2,

Say(Muhammad, to mankind): Who is an enemy to Gabriel! For he it is who revealed (this scripture) to thy heart by Allāh's leave, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, and a guidance and glad tidings to believers.

Who is an enemy to Allāh, His angels and His messengers, and Gabriel and Michael! Then, lo! Allāh (Himself) is an enemy to the disbelievers.

In Q 26 we read,

Which the True Spirit has brought down.
Upon thy heart, that thou mayest be (one)
of the warners.

We read also in Q 16,

He sendeth down the angels with the Spirit of His command unto whom He will of His bondmen, (saying): Warn mankind that there is no god save Me, so keep your duty unto me.

The phrase "who revealed to thy heart" in Q 2 is to be related to the phrase "has brought down upon thy heart" in Q 26, so as the phrase "True Spirit" in Q 26 to the phrase "the angels with the Spirit of his command". The

relationship between all these phrases leads us to an idea that Gabriel is one of many angels, that his main task is to bring his God's commandments to the Prophet. The word "Gabriel" in Q 2 can be interpreted as either one of "His angels" or "His messengers".

In this connection, Muslim Scholars view "Gabriel" as an angel. He is God's messenger (*rasūl Allāh*) to His Prophet (*Rasūl Allāh* sent to the nation of human beings). Thus, the revelation has been carried out by an angel; i.e. Gabriel. This suggestion is in concurrence with Qur'ān 42:51, that there was a messenger sent by God to reveal what He wills.

"And it was not (vouchsafed) to any mortal that Allah should speak to him unless (it be) by revelation, or from behind a veil, or (that) He sendeth a messenger to reveal what He will by His leave. Lo! He is exalted, wise."

So, *wahy* in the sense of 'revelation' will be given by any of the above three means .

The means of revelation therefore are:

1. Inspiration, e.g. in a dream (see Q 37:102, where it is related that Ibrāhīm receives guidance in a vision, while asleep, to sacrifice his son)

2. Speech hidden away (see Q 27:8, where it is related that God spoke to Mūsā from the fire).

3. Words (speech) sent through a special messenger to Muhammad to reveal His message.

The process of the revelation of the Qur'ān had taken twenty three years.³⁸ It was not revealed all at once. This has been confirmed by the Qur'ān itself,³⁹ many āyāt were revealed in response to a particular cause or reason (*Sabab al-Nuzūl*).

Suyūṭī has brought various reports that the Prophet was taught the Qur'ānic revelation little by little according to necessity. Among other things, the reasons why the revelation was given little by little over the period of twenty three years are to make it easy for the Prophet and his companions to memorize it and to make them acquainted with the laws of God and implement them gradually.⁴⁰ It was quite impossible for them to memorize the Qur'ān if it was revealed all at once. Although it was taught little by little, there were occasions reported that the Prophet himself was said to have forgotten several portions of the Qur'ān.⁴¹ He asked his scribes to write it down immediately after the revelation.

During this time, Arab society was mostly illiterate. Not many people knew writing and reading.⁴² They have been called by the Qur'ān *ummiyy* ⁴³. Even the Prophet has also been called *ummiyy*.⁴⁴

R. Bell argues that, Muhammad was not illiterate. He knew how to read and write. On one occasion, he is said to have written with his own hand, the treaty of Hudaibiyah.⁴⁵

However, Bell's theory can be opposed on the ground of his translation of Qur'ān 29:47 ⁴⁶ when he says "Thou hast not been in the habit of reciting or tracing with thy hand any book before it." This translation is not exactly what we could derive from the Arabic sense.

Pitckhall's translation is "And thou (O Muhammad) not a reader of any scripture before it, nor didst thou write it with thy right hand. For then might those have doubted, who follow falsehood."

A.Yūsuf ^cAlī's translation is "and thou wast not (able) to recite a book before this (book came), nor art thou (able) to transcribe it with thy right hand. In that case, indeed, would the talkers of vanities have doubted."

A.J. Arberry's translation is " Not before this didst thou recite any book, or inscribe it with thy right hand, for then those who follow falsehood would have doubted."

The most we could understand from Qur'ān 29:48, is that Muḥammad could probably read and write after the revelations but he had not written the Qur'ān with his own hand.

Many scribes were hired by him to carry out this job. The latest figure is that there were about forty eight scribes who offered services to him.⁴⁷ This number was small in the beginning but, it is believed, increased gradually since he instigated his companions to learn writing and reading, even to study other languages.⁴⁸ Apart from that, there were people taught by the first Meccan war prisoners.

The prisoners were released after they taught the Medinans how to write and read.⁴³⁹

Another point is that revelation little by little could give an opportunity to people to be familiar with it and feel easy with the new regulations imposed upon them. For example it was said that, drink was a usual phenomenon during that time. People might be afflicted with difficulties if they were forced to avoid drinking liquor at once because most of them were addicted to liquor. Even the Prophet's companions were addicted to it.⁴⁴⁰

Hence, the prohibition of liquor had taken place in four stages.

1. Indirect instigation to avoid it.⁴⁴¹
2. Direct instigation to avoid it by the way of weighing between its evil and goodness.⁴⁴²
3. Prohibition temporarily for a certain occasion or period.⁴⁴³
4. The total prohibition of drinking liquors.⁴⁴⁴

Similarly in other cases, though there were no stages in the prohibition, gradual enforcement was still needed. Hence, they were not over burdened with obligations and prohibitions.

Suyūṭī reports from the various authorities that each time the Prophet was taught five verses of the Qur'ān⁴⁴⁵ though sometimes the revelation contained more than five verses. Based on this, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī taught his pupils five verses in the morning and five more in the afternoon.⁴⁴⁶

The Prophet was also taught by Gabriel the way to recite the Qur'ān. This has been discussed in chapter two. By this way of reciting, he grasped the understanding of the verses and was able to memorize them.

The art of memorization is one of the special characteristics of teaching the Qur'ān since the Prophet's time until our days. "The way to receive the Qur'ān is to become its *ḥāfiẓ*, committing it entirely to memory so that its phrases and themes are constantly present for quotation and its meaning and music treasured in the heart."⁵⁷

Muḥammad taught his companions how to read and understand the Qur'ān.⁵⁸ The companions studied the Qur'ān, not only to read but also to understand its verses.

They studied the Qur'ān and tried to memorize it.⁵⁹ At one time, there were not many verses to be learned. They took a long time to memorize the *sūrah*s of the Qur'ān. Ibn Umar was reported to have memorized *sūrah al-Baqarah* within eight years.⁶⁰ The companions are said to have learned the Qur'ān in the mosque. Ḥākim has reported the situation where the companions used to be in their circle to study the Qur'ān or to memorize it in a group. Sometimes they listened to the recitation of the Qur'ān from their colleagues.⁶¹

Those who were absent from the lessons given by the Prophet, would be taught by their colleagues. On many occasions, some of the companions were not always together with the Prophet, because they were busy with their daily obligations, such as looking after the herds and camels.⁶²

The Prophet is reported to have said "you all listened to me and (those who were absent) should listen to you. The others should also listen to those who listened to you".³³

The companions were very careful to study the Qur'ān. They would not memorize it for the purpose of memorization but more of understanding and practising.³⁴ They could do this because there were not many subjects to be studied. According to Hākim, other subjects to be studied by them is the traditions of the Prophet.³⁵

After the Prophet died, the companions maintained the method of teaching the Qur'ān they had in the time of the Prophet. For example, the people in Hims learned the Qur'ān in a circle and this was praised by Mu'awiyah because this pattern of studying Qur'ān had been practised in the time of the Prophet.³⁶

All in all, almost all the companions who were sent abroad to spread the teaching of Islam had made the Qur'ān their first reference. One who had been sent abroad to hold certain administrative positions must be well-versed in the Qur'ānic studies. For example, Mu'ādh b. Jabal had admitted that the Qur'ān was his first reference in whatever judgement he might have passed.³⁷ In response to the difficulty of having copies of the Qur'an text, he must have memorized the Qur'ān by heart.³⁸

The method of transmission of the Qur'ān from one generation to another remained much the same after the companion's time, unless there were several alterations in

the subjects covered in the circle. Zwemer explains the method of teaching in Makkah in the late nineteenth century. He writes "everything is on the old lines beginning and ending with the Qur'ān "ḥ. He further writes:

"The child of intellectual promise is first taught his alphabet from a small wooden board on which they are written by the teacher; slates are unknown. Then he learns the Abjad or numerical value of each letter. After this he learns to write down the ninety nine names of Allah and to read the first chapter of the Koran; then he attacks the last two chapters, because they are short. The teacher next urges him through the book, making the pupil read at the top of his voice. The greatest strictness is observed as to pronunciation and pauses but nothing whatever is said to explain the meaning of the words. Having thus finished the Koran, the pupil takes up the elements of grammar, ...Then follow the liberal sciences,..."⁷⁰

The methods of teaching in the Qur'ān.

There is no doubt that Muḥammad was not only a Prophet but also a teacher to Muslims. As a teacher he had a very special role in moulding their character. In the Qur'ān we read:

"Verily in the messenger of Allāh ye have
a good example for him who looketh unto
Allah and the Last Day, and remembereth
Allah much". 71.

Hence, the Islamic educators also have their own role to be played in the process of giving *ʿilm* (Ta'dīb).

They must be concerned with bringing up their pupils in such a way that the pupils are not engaged in evil behaviour. The Educators are not only responsible for arranging the teaching situations but also to guide their pupils from being involved in the wrong path.

All prophets are described as worried when their *ummah* paid negative responses to their mission. The Prophet Muḥammad was also described as feeling very worried at one time when his people showed negative attitudes towards his *daʿwah* in Makkah. We read the Qur'ān:

"It may be that thou tormentest thyself
(Muhammad) because they believe not." 72.

In another verse we read: "Yet it may be, if they believe not in this statement, that thou (Muhammad) wilt torment thy soul with grief over their footsteps".⁷³.

The term *bākhi*^c in these verses referring to this psychological distress may be understood to mean self-destruction.⁷⁴.

In another verse, *Taubah*(9):128, the Prophet is described as ardently anxious over the believers. This is because he has been said to be the best example to be followed and he felt this as his responsibility.

There must be interrelations between the educator and his student. Any teacher who is aware of his duty will evince some kind of response to his students activities, whether negative or positive. He, of course may not indoctrinate certain values in his students, but he has a duty to inculcate certain attitudes in his students. In this regard Phenix says, :

"Yet in broad outline, the case for the teacher as maker~~of~~ persons seems irrefutable. A young child left to itself would die. It needs the fostering care of older and stronger people".⁷⁵.

He further says:

"Thus, persons inevitably enter into the making of the human being. The teacher is simply one who intentionally and professionally undertakes the task of fashioning the young".⁷⁶

Islam recognizes the role of the teacher in this area. Islam does not allow the teacher to remain neutral in matters of faith. In Qur'ānic education, the pupil is entitled to sound guidance which he should receive since the early days of his childhood. This is because the pupil can hardly make a right choice without some instruction. This right choice which is called good *fiṭrah* must not be altered.

We read the Qur'ān:

" So set thy purpose (Muḥammad) for religion as a man bynature upright- the nature(framed) of Allāh, in which He created man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allāh'screation."⁷⁷

This is the starting point of the teacher and this is also the limitation on the authority given to him. Therefore, the teacher has no right to violate his students innate qualities which are given to them by God.

The teacher must be able to serve his students and must know how to guide them towards the basic needs of the

individual rather than the personal interests if their personal interests are not relevant to their basic needs.

The teacher must be aware that the students' personal interests are not always similar to what they need. Even the Prophet has been said to have had certain personal interests which were not relevant to his basic needs as a Prophet-teacher. There were many occasions where his decisions were altered by God.⁷⁸ For instance, in the case of Badr prisoners Muhammad did not kill them, instead, he asked *fidyah* from those who were wealthy, or asked the literate among them to teach Medīnans reading and writing, or if both conditions were unable to be fulfilled, they were released on condition that they would not invade Madīnah forever. Qur'ān Anfāl(8):67 has criticised this decision.

Making the students interested in good and sound activities is a matter of method. The teacher's success relies on the way he approaches his students. Otherwise, he might face difficulties.

Harshness in educating is not allowed by the Qur'ān. Being kind to the student is enjoined by the Qur'ān. We read the Qur'ān:

"call unto the way of thy Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way".⁷⁹

It is stated that had the Prophet been severe or harsh-hearted, they would have broken away from about him. Therefore, the Prophet had been ordered to forgive them and ask forgiveness from God for them. Any problems that

cropped up between them, must be discussed and the decision should be taken with their knowledge. We read :

"It was by the mercy of Allāh that thou wast lenient with them (Muhammad), for if thou hadst been stern and fierce of heart they would have dispersed from round about thee. So pardon them and ask forgiveness for them and consult with them upon the conduct of affairs."⁸⁰

In *Hijr*(15):18, the Prophet was ordered to lower his wing in gentleness to the believers :

"And lower thy wing (in tenderness) for the believers"⁸¹.

In another verse, the Prophet was forbidden from using harsh words. The harsh words are described as donkey's braying.

"Be modest in thy bearing and subdue thy voice. Lo, the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass".⁸²

The good teacher, who is very eager to educate his students and to arouse their interest must consider the methods which he will employ. Failure to do so, might jeopardise the students' interests.

Making the method of teaching varied in order to achieve the aims of education is another way of approaching learners. In the Qur'ān, several methods are used to convey Allah's message to the people. The methods could be summarized as follows:

1. The stories.
2. The questions and deductions.
3. The metaphors.
4. The demonstrations.
5. The reflections.
6. The trials and errors.
7. The instructions.

We are now going to examine these variant methods of teaching with their examples as stated in the Qur'ān.

The stories.

This method is the most popular among the many methods of teaching in the Qur'ān.

Generally speaking many of the chapters or *sūrah*s of the Qur'ān contain this method. Human beings are the most frequent characters of the story. We could see many figures who were appointed to be and considered prophets or apostles of their God. Their names are mentioned several times such as Ādam, Nūḥ, Ibrāhīm and his two sons Ishāq and Ismā'īl, Zulkifl, Mūsā and 'Isā. Some of them are mentioned simultaneously with their *ummah* or followers and the others

separately stating their roles to preach the religion conveyed to them by their Lord.

The Qur'ān considers them all as Muslim ⁸⁴ although their way of teaching might be varied one from another. This is because their basic teaching was the same; that is to bow and prostrate only to Allah.

All in all, the stories in the Qur'ān always convey the message that the good will prevail and the evil will lose.

The Qur'ān narrates many stories about people ranging from ordinary persons up to the kings and nations.

We find in *sūrah al-Kahf*(18) verses 60-82, the story of Musa with a knowledgeable man, whom Mūsā wanted to learn from, but ultimately he failed, because he was not patient in acquiring knowledge which was not familiar to him.

In *sūrah al-Kahf* verses 9-22, there was a story about a group of young men ⁸⁵ who believed in God and went against their people and nation who were infidels. The Qur'ān calls them young men (*fityah*). They believe in God and subsequently God increased them in guidance. They were given guidance after they believed in God.

At this juncture, we can deduce that according to the Qur'ānic teaching, belief in God is the very first characteristic of a good person. Failing this one would not get the divine guidance (*hudā*).

From the story of Yūsuf, a teacher could deduce that women mostly are attracted by smart gentlemen. Women ⁸⁶

were often said to be after him but with the grace of God, he managed to avoid all temptations that he faced.

He preferred to be sentenced to prison rather than follow their desire. In the end, when the real circumstances had been revealed, he was released and appointed as an official in charge of the treasury of the state.

Another thing we can deduce from his story is that, the brothers from different mothers are not always as in good relation as the brothers from the same parent. The jealousy appeared from his older brothers who were not from the same mother. Because of their jealousy, Yūsuf had been inflicted with horrors until he was appointed to be an official in the government's treasury.

As usual, this story ended with the good character prevailing. Yūsuf story has been devoted in a special *sūrah* called after his name, though he was mentioned many times in other *sūrahs*.

As for the stories of the nations one observes that among the most frequently recurring in the Qur'ān are those of Banū Isrā'īl, 'Ād and Thamūd.²⁷

The story of Banū Isrā'īl occupies^a very large part of the historical events in the Qur'ān. Besides having many partial stories and repetition in many *sūrahs*, there is a *sūrah* called after their name.²⁸ Mūsā was one of the Prophets sent to this nation. The most interesting event of the story of this nation is that Mūsā was under the custody of Fir'aun (Pharaoh) since his childhood. In fact he was one of the

children whom Fir'aun intended to have killed because according to his advisors later his power would be uprooted and ousted by a newly born baby of Banū Isrā'īl. Nonetheless, with the advice of his wife, he accepted Mūsā to be his adopted son. Mūsā had gone against him and thus run away from the palace. When he came back and fought Fir'aun with his miracles the latter was defeated and even some of his followers followed Mūsā. He was very angry and killed his dissident followers. Mūsā having been chased by Fir'aun, ran away together with Banū Isrā'īl. Eventually Fir'aun drowned in the sea.

Maurice Bucaille says that he has examined the mummified body of Fir'aun of the Exodus in 1975 which had been discovered by Loret in 1898 at Thebes in the King's valley whence it was transported to Cairo. Many photographs had been taken.⁸⁹ However the mummy's condition had deteriorated and fragments had disappeared compared to its condition when it was first discovered in 1898.

Those who seek among modern data for proof of the veracity of the Holy Scriptures will find a magnificent illustration of the verses of the Qur'ān in the Fir'aun body. Allah has guaranteed in the Qur'ān 10:92 that his earthly remains were saved by His will from destruction to become a sign to men come after him.⁹⁰

Personal glorification is not the central theme in the Qur'ānic stories.⁹¹ The most important message, as we have said, is the struggle between good and evil which results in

the defeat of the latter.³² There are many cases of the identity of individuals or nations are unknown. For example, the identity of Fir'aun,³³ al-Āzīz the governor of Egypt in the time of Yūsuf ³⁴ and his wife who tempted Yūsuf ³⁵ remain unidentified. The identification of the knowledgeable man whom Mūsā wanted to learn from is also kept secret.³⁶

One may say that the stories in the Qur'ān are nothing but repetition. Actually the recurrence of the same facts in several *surahs* is not mere repetition. Here repetition is accompanied by some variations. This fact has a significant relevance for education.³⁷ Repetition which is accompanied by new illustrations or comments is more productive than mere repetition which is likely to be boring.³⁸

To Muhammad, the stories provide him with some sort of psychological reinforcement in his struggle against non-believers. The Qur'ān 38:12-16 and 50:12-15 has promised Muhammad that his opponents would be defeated as those before him were defeated.

The questions and deductions.

The second method of teaching in the Qur'ān is asking questions. These questions come either in response to a statement or they may serve as a starting point.

In Qur'ān 2:30-32 there was a dialogue between God and angels on the ground that the angels were not satisfied with the creation of human beings as *khalīfah* on earth. In Qur'ān

7:12 there was a question and answer between God and Iblīs upon the reason why he did not want to prostrate Ādam. In Qur'ān 2:260 the dialogue between Ibrāhīm and his Lord on why he persisted to see the way God makes the dead body alive. In 21:52 there was a dialogue between him and his people on why they should abstain from worshipping idols. Through this dialogue there is a deduction gained at the end of the question and answer session, that worshipping idols is pointless since they cannot speak and cannot respond to the question.

Shāfi'ī has used this method in his book *al-Risālah*. He has expressed many questions and answers. This leads us to a situation that a series of dialogues is beneficial in the cause of teaching. For example, there are questions and answers on the subject of *nāsikh* and *mansūkh*.²²

The metaphors.

Among the methods of teaching is giving metaphors. In Qur'ān 30:58 and 39:27 we read:

"Verily We have coined for mankind in the Qur'ān all kinds of similitudes".

In another verse of Qur'ān 29:41-43 we read:

"The likeness of those who choose other patrons than Allāh is the likeness of the

spider when she taketh unto herself a house, and lo! the frailest of all houses is the spider's house, if they but knew. Lo! Allah knoweth what thing they invoke instead of Him. He is the mighty, the wise. As for these similitudes, We coin them for mankind, but none will grasp their meaning save the wise."

In these verses the one who makes a partner to God, is just like the spider's web which is very flimsy. It can collapse at any time.

In 14:18, the work of infidels is pictured as ashes which will be blown furiously by the wind.

In 2:261-265, the Qur'an urges people to spend in the cause of Allah. Their deed has been pictured as similar to a grain of corn which produces seven ears each having one hundred grains.

The non-believers are mentioned as the people who do not understand the importance of these similes. They keep on questioning them and consider them as nothing. In 74:31, they say :

"What meaneth Allah by this similitude?"

The metaphors always use tangible objects as their characters. This is to facilitate the understanding of the message and to make it easy to be perceived. Abstract

concepts can only be given to the students after they have been familiar with these teachings.

The demonstration.

Demonstration is one of the non-verbal methods of the teaching in the Qur'ān. There are few examples of this method mentioned in the Qur'ān. The most outstanding example is in Qur'ān 5:34, where the son of Ādam who killed his brother learned how to bury the corpse of his brother from a raven which had killed its rival.

Once, Ibn ^cAbbās is said to have faced difficulty in understanding the meaning of the word *fāṭir*. He knew this meaning only after he overheard two desert Arabs quarrelling over a well, when suddenly one of them said *anā faṭartuhā*.¹⁰⁰

This visual demonstration can be used as a method of teaching to those who can grasp the meaning of something or its concept through actions.

This method of teaching is very helpful especially in subjects which involve skill rather than theory.

The reflections.

In many part of the Qur'ān, Allah urges people to reflect on His signs.

Many verses urge people to take a journey and to reflect on the greatness of the creator through ruins of buildings and places. In this connection, we could suggest that the mummy of Fir'aun which had been discovered in 1898 at Thebes, is evidence of the true history in the Qur'ān.¹⁰¹

As for the place, the word *Raqīm* in Qur'ān 18:9 is most probably a place-name. It was a place in the desert country of S. Palestine.¹⁰²

The trials and errors.

In this method we see, the Prophet had been given chances to make decisions on certain problems. In Qur'ān 66:1 his action has been criticised by His God for he had made illegal certain foods following his wife's desire.

In 33:37 he was criticised because of not revealing the true decision passed by God to him to marry Zainab.

In another case, in 8:68, in the case of Badr prisoners his decision once again had been corrected by his Lord. In 9:80 and 84, the Prophet was ordered to abstain from observing prayers over the deceased body of *munāfiqūn*.

However, in many cases his decisions were endorsed by God, among them his decision to intercept the caravans of Quraish before the battle of Badr and to dig a moat in another battle.

This trial and error method, could be implemented in the class provided that there be a supervisor who can guide the pupils in case they go astray.

The Instructions.

This is a very common phenomenon of the methods of teaching in the Qur'ān. The Prophet was instructed by His Lord many times, especially in the case of *āyāt al-ahkām*. For example in in 2:43 we read:

"establish worship, pay the poor-due, and bow your heads with those who bow(in worship)"

In 7:199, we read:

"keep to forgiveness (Muhammad), and enjoin kindness, and turn away from the ignorant."

In 9:103 we read:

"Take alms of their wealth, wherewith thou mayst purify them and mayst make them grow, and pray for them. Lo! thy prayer is an assuagement for them".

This method of teaching is very common to teachers, because most of the time, the teacher is the one to ask his pupils to do certain works in order to achieve the aims of education.

To conclude, the Qur'ānic method of teaching has two types. One is the verbal communication and the other is practical. These methods still have their momentum in the present days.

Nonetheless, as we have seen earlier, the methods of teaching the Qur'ān have not been similar to what is suggested by the Qur'ān itself.

Footnotes
Chapter five

1. ʿAbdul-Raḥmān Ṣāliḥ ʿAbdullāh, *Educational Theory: A Qurʾānic Outlook* (Mecca: Ummul Qura University, 1982), p. 116.
2. *ibid.*
3. E. W. Putney, "Moslem Philosophy of Education", *MW* 6 (1961), 190.
4. *ibid.*
5. A scholar in the fourth century (d.403) who wrote a treatise on teachers and pupils, entitled, *Aḥwāl al-Mutaʿallimīn wa Ahkām al-Muʿallimīn wa'l Mutaʿallimīn*.

See, A.L. Tibawi, "Muslim Education in the Golden Age of the Caliphate", *IC* 28 (July 1954), 435; and Aḥmad Fuād Aḥwānī, *al-Tarbiyah fi'l Islam* (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1968), p. 267.
6. Aḥwānī, *Tarbiyah*, p. 99.
7. *ibid.*
8. A.H. Fahmy, *The Educational Ideas of the Muslims in the Middle Ages* (M.A. Thesis, University of Birmingham, 1937), p. 88.
9. *ibid.*, quoting Nammāri Qurtubī's "*Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*" vol.1, p. 62.
10. Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Ghazālī, *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, 4 vols. (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah al-Kubrā, n.d), 1:2&24.

11. *ibid.* p. 30.
12. *ibid.* pp. 87-88.
13. Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah*, trans. Franz Rosenthal, abr. and ed. N.J. Dawood (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 339-340.
14. Ahwāni, *Tarbiyah*, p. 248.
15. Ghazālī, *Ihyā'*, 1:13. "wa'l 'aql ashraf *ṣifāt al-insān*."
16. Ahwāni, *Tarbiyah*, p. 240.
17. *ibid.* p. 241.
18. *ibid.* p. 240-241.
19. *Mujādalah*(58):11.
20. Fahmy, *Educational Ideas*, p. 105.
21. Muslim, K. Ṣalāh al Musāfirīn, *bāb Fadīlah Ḥāfiz al-Qur'ān*.
22. *ibid.*
23. Cragg, *Mind*, p. 30.
24. Bukhārī, K. al-Tafsīr, *bāb Man Rāya Bī qirā'ah al-Qur'ān*.
25. Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Draz, "The Origin of Islam", in *Islam- The Straight Path*, ed. Kenneth W. Morgan (New York: The Ronald Press Company), p. 36.
26. *Fur'qān*(25):1; *Baqarah*(2):185.
27. *Qalam*(68):4.
28. 'Alaq(96):1-5.
29. For the discussion of who is the agent of the revelation, please see note 37.
30. Muslim, *bāb Bad' al-Wahy* (*kitāb al-Īmān*).

31. Revelation should be distinguished from a mere inspiration.
32. Gabriel is said to have come to Muhammad with this sound. This form of revelation is the hardest. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, 1:160.
33. *ibid.* 1:161.
34. *ibid.* pp. 160-161.
35. *ibid.* p. 159.
36. *ibid.*
37. A.T. Welch has been doubtful of who's who the bearer or the agent of the revelation. See *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed. (1986), s.v. "Al-Kur'an".
38. The scholars disagreed upon the period within which Muhammad had received the revelation. Some say twenty years. The others say twenty three or twenty five years. *Itqan*, vol.1, pp. 149 & 162; *Burhān*, vol.1, p. 232; and C.S. Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism*, p. 15.
39. *Isrā'*(17):106, *Fur'qān*(25):32.
40. Muhammad ʿAlī al-Sābūnī, *al-Tibyān fī ʿUlūm al-Qur'ān* (1980), p. 33.
41. Bukhārī, bāb Nisyan al-Qur'ān (kitab al-Tafsīr).
42. Balādhuri has stated in his book, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān*, ed. Salāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahḍah al-Misriyyah, n.d.), p. 580, that there was about seventeen literate Quraishites who had been converted to Islam.
43. *Jum'ah*(62):2.

44. *A'raf*(7):157 & 158.
45. Bell, *Introduction*, p. 18. Ibn Hishām in his *Sīrah al-Nabīy*, 3:366, does not mention anything about the Prophet's writing of the treaty.
46. Most of the Muslims regard Q 29:47 of R. Bell's, the forty eighth of *sūrah al-ʿankabūt*(29).
The verse is *wa mā kunta tatlū min qablihī min kitāb wa lā takhuttuhū bi yamīnik idhan lartāb al-mubtilūn*.
47. Aʿzami, *Kuttāb al-Nabīy*, p. 4.
48. *ibid.* p. 15. See also, Tibawi, "*Muslim Education in Golden Age*", p. 421.
49. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *Uyūn al-Athar*, vol.1, p. 343.
50. Sābūnī, *Tibyān*, p. 37.
51. *Nahl*(16):67.
52. *Baqarah*(2):219.
53. *Nisā'*(4):43.
54. *Māidah*(5):90.
55. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, vol.1, 156.
56. *ibid.*
57. Cragg, *Mind*, p. 26. See also Qamar(54):17 &32.
58. The subject of how the companions pronounced the Qur'ān and the way they read it have been discussed in the second chapter.
59. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, vol.4, p. 202.
60. *ibid.*
61. Hākim, *Mustadrak*, vol. 1, p. 94.

62. *ibid.* p. 95.
63. *ibid.*
64. Suyūṭī, *Itqān*, vol. 4, p. 202.
65. Ḥakīm, *Mustadrak*, vol.1, pp. 94 & 95.
66. *ibid.* p. 94.
67. Ibn Tallā^c, *Aqḍīyah Rasūl Allāh*, p. 27.
Ibn Hishām, *Sīrah al-Nabīy*, 4:260.
68. The copies of the Qur'an text were sent abroad
in the reign of Uṯman.
69. S.M. Zwemer, *Arabia: The Cradle of Islam*
(Edinburgh & London: Oliphant Anderson & Ferrier,
1900), p. 43.
70. *ibid.* pp. 43-44.
71. *Aḥzāb*(33):21.
72. *Shu'arā'*(26):3.
73. *Kahf*(18):6.
74. Cragg, *Mind*, p.88.
75. Philip H. Phenix, *Philosophy of Education* (New York:
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958), p. 41.
76. *ibid.*
77. *Rūm*(30):30.
78. Draz, *al-Naba' al-Āzīm*, pp. 17-18.
79. *Nahl*(16):125.
80. *Āl Imrān*(3):159.
81. See also *Shu'arā'*(26):215.
82. *Luqmān*(31):19.
83. These names are pronounced according to the

Qur'ānic pronunciation.

84. For example, Ibrāhīm has been described as *hanīfan musliman* in Qur'ān 3:67 and those who follow Ibrāhīm are called *hanīf* as in Qur'ān 3:95, 4:125, 6:79 and 161.
85. As per their number, people disagreed whether they were three, five or seven. Qur'ān 18:22 has confirmed this uncertainty among people.
86. According to some exegetes the women were Zulaikhā the wife of al-^ʿazīz and her opponents
87. ARS Abdullah, *Educational Theory*, p. 175.
88. The *sūrah* is also called by the name *al-Isrā'*.
Bucaille has devoted his studies to the story of Musa under a sub-title the Exodus. He makes the comparison between the Biblical and the Qur'ānic narration. See Bucaille, *The Bible The Qur'ān*.
89. Bucaille, *The Bible The Qur'ān*, p. 211.
90. *Yunus*(10):93 which reads" But this day We save thee in thy body that thou mayest be a portent for those after thee. Lo! most of mankind are heedless of our portents.
91. ARS Abdullah, *Educational Theory*, p. 176.
92. *ibid.*
93. The word *Fir'aun* occurs some seventy four times in the Qur'ān. The commentators tell us that *Fir'aun* was the title of the kings of the Amalekites just as Chosroes and Ceasar were titles of the kings of Persia and Roum.

- Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of The Qur'ān* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1938), p. 225.
94. *Yūsuf*(12):21 and 25.
95. *Yūsuf*(12):23, 30, and 51.
96. *Kahf*(18):65.
97. ARS Abdullah, *Educational Theory*, p. 180.
98. *ibid.*
99. Shāfi'ī, *Risālah*, pp. 108-113.
100. Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, p. 7.
101. Bucaille, *The Bible The Qur'ān*, p. 213.
102. Jeffery, *Foreign Vocabulary*, p. 144.

Conclusion.

Islam is the second largest religion in the world today. Its teachings cover all aspects of human life, from belief in God (*īmān*) to everyday activities. Its teachings also touch upon the various aspects of humanity from the time before man's existence to life after death.

It cannot be denied that human being needs rules and regulations to live properly. Without these laws, humans will always be in trouble as they will fight with each other and not unite. There will be a lot of wrong doing, the community will be destroyed, the rich will take advantage of the poor and the strong will make use of the weak.

The best law is that which is accepted by man externally and internally. People need not be forced to accept a good law. They will accept it whole heartedly. The fairness of a certain law can be felt by all the people, resulting in their acceptance of it and their desire to uphold it. They will feel safe under that particular law.

Before the emergence of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad, mankind and specifically the Arab people were under man-made laws which lacked universal justice and fairness. Some examples are the murder of female children and battles between two *qabīlahs* arising from trifling matters. These illustrate the destruction of their morals. On the international arena we see that the great powers at that time, Persia and Rome, were always fighting and trying to

gain influence for their own benefit. Those who usually suffered as a result of this were the smaller countries.

With the arrival of Islam the influence of these two powers lessened. Persia finally fell and accepted Islam as a way of life. Many countries which had been ruled by Rome gained their freedom and accepted Islam as a way of life and practised Islamic laws.

The basis of Islamic law is its intrinsic justice. Its sources are the Qur'ān and Sunnah. These are known as *sharī'ah*. The laws which are based on these two sources are known as *fiqh*. Islamic thinkers have different views on *fiqh*. The Qur'ān as the source of law in Islam is revelation from God while Muḥammad is the spreader of the revelation. Muḥammad's followers were taught the teachings of the Qur'ān. It is said that initially, the Qur'ān was allowed to be read by any of the various *qabīlah* according to each *qabīlah*'s style of Arabic language. From this arose the state or condition whereby the Qur'ān could be read in seven *aḥruf*.

The scholars have conflicting opinions regarding the seven *aḥruf*. Some of their views can be considered to be so far from the truth that it is almost impossible to believe that these are the views of those who have studied the Qur'ān. The seven *aḥruf* are not of any significance save for the fact that they were only variant readings of the Qur'ān among the Arab people at that time.

The possibility of reading the Qur'ān using different wordings illustrates a phenomenon or characteristic of the Arab people; that is, their difficulty in being united. Each tribe prefers to use its own dialect. If there are reports that the Islamic army in battles in the period after the death of the Prophet used different style of readings of the Qur'ān, then this is not surprising. We should not also be surprised that the use of varying readings caused them to quarrel with each other, since it is their characteristic to be hard, quarrelsome, very strong-willed with respect to their own opinion and difficult to unite.

If the Qur'ān were not made into a single form of reading then there was a possibility that the Arab people, which were not united before the advent of Islam, could not be united for the future.

For that reason efforts to unite the reading of the Qur'ān were made during the reign of ʿUthmān. The work of collecting the Qur'ān in ʿUthmān's time was only with respect to uniting the various readings and not the collection from scattered sources, as this work had already been done by the two preceding Caliphs, Abū Bakr and ʿUmar.

All in all, Zaid was pictured as a hero in the process of collecting the Qur'ān. The first three caliphs referred to him in their attempt to preserve the Qur'an. No one was better committed to the Qur'ān than Zaid.

This happened because Zaid was the favourite scribe of the Prophet. Bukhārī mentions him only as the Prophet's

scribe. It seems as if none other than him was better able to memorize the Qur'ān. The task may well have never been completed without him.

A question comes to our mind here. If this is the case, why should Zaid refer to other people in completing his task to collect the Qur'ān to the extent that he and another companion were asked to stay at a door of the Mosque asking people about āyaṭ of the Qur'ān, although other people were not as capable as Zaid, for Zaid was said to have been together with the Prophet in the final revision of the Qur'ān.

What is more questionable is that Zaid was pictured to have referred to Abū Khuzaimah or Khuzaimah b. Thābit in his first attempt to collect the Qur'ān and to Abū Khuzaimah in the second when he missed a few verses of the Qur'ān. Abū Khuzaimah or Khuzaimah was not known to the people. There were many other companions who were supposed to be more capable than he.

If the reference is true, it may lead us to an idea that Zaid's first collection was incomplete because he was pictured to have referred to Abū Khuzaimah once again in his second collection. This seems unreasonable because the first two caliphs would not let their people err in their Qur'ānic reading.

Despite the fact that 'Uthmān had united the reading of the Qur'ān, the Arab people still argued and held differing opinions, as being quarrelsome is part of their character.

Some readings were uttered according to their own *lahjah*. In the end, this gave rise to differing readings even though the initial source is the same, i.e. *muṣḥaf* ʿUthmān.

It is from this that the variant readings arise; these comprise those which were accepted (*mutawātir*) and those which were rejected (*shāz*). This means that ʿUthmān's efforts, which were said to have been agreed to by all of the companions, were not successful. This was due to the natural tendency of the Arab not to unite.

With respect to the Qur'ān, there was not only difference in reading but also in the rulings or legal matters. For example, there are verses on *zinā* which bear a different ruling. Verses 4:15 and 4:16 describe the appropriate punishment for sexual misconduct.

According to 4:15, those guilty of this crime should be imprisoned in their houses, but according to 4:16 they should be punished. However, the penalty is not mentioned. It has apparently been left to the Muslims to determine it. Both of these punishments, whatever they were, had been overtaken and superseded by the flogging of Qur'ān 24:2 which states that those guilty should be caned 100 times.

In another example the Qur'ān states that the people fighting for Islam should be patient and continue fighting even though they are down to a ratio of 1:10, but in another part of the Qur'ān it is stated that they should do so until they are down to a ratio of 1:2. This matter becomes a subject of dispute among Islamic scholars.

Some say that even though the limit is 1:2, the Islamic army is forbidden to run from war if the ratio is greater than 1:2. The armies of Islam are forbidden to withdraw as withdrawal is considered to be against the sunnah of the Prophet.

Here we can see that there are many different opinions among Islamic scholars regarding the status of verses giving variant rulings. This, in turn, gave rise to the theory of *naskh* whereby some verses became *nāsikh* while others became *mansūkh*. The scholars studied *asbāb nuzūl* of *āyāt* and the date on which the *āyāt* were revealed or used in legal proceedings. Of two *āyāt* which differ in the ruling, the *āyah* revealed earlier is considered as *mansūkh* while the *āyah* revealed later is considered *nāsikh*. The scholars also have disagreed regarding which *āyah* was earlier and which was later.

Our concern now is why these scholars disagreed on these matters. Looking into the examples demonstrated by the scholars we can deduce that *naskh* pertaining to the verses of the Qur'ān is a subject of dispute among the scholars due to their different interpretations over certain *āyāt*. The differences are the result of their commitment to a particular school of thought.

The theory of abrogation thus, was instituted so far by the scholars in order to preserve their legal doctrines. The Qur'ānic legal verses were interpreted in such a way that they can suit these doctrines.

As a result, there are disputes among the scholars in determining which *āyāt* can be considered to be applicable in ruling. In other words, in *naskh*, the Islamic scholars are in disagreement about two things:

1. To determine the verses on which the concept of *naskh* can be applied.
2. To determine which are *nāsikh* and which are *mansūkh* among the particular verses to which the concept is applicable.

Thus, the number of the alleged instances of *naskh* in the Qur'ān varied from one scholar to another. For example, Hibat Allāh in his book records more than two hundred verses. Suyūṭi records about twenty or twenty one verses. Shāh Wali Allāh, in his book *al-Fawz al-Kabīr* records merely five verses of the Qur'ān where *naskh* is applicable.

To sum up, the alleged instances of *naskh* in our Qur'ān text are more likely to be an *iftihad* of the scholars. However, without *naskh*, the Qur'ān text is apparently to be incomplete.

The Islamic legal system is a way of achieving a disciplined and ordered society. Even though in Qur'ānic law there are some disagreements in its regulations that need the abrogation of certain regulations, this should not lead us to neglect the concept of education in the Qur'ān because the companions who were trained by the Prophet considered the Qur'ān as a source of education. The concept of education is part and parcel of the moral aspects which

Qur'ānic law attempts to raise, in order to achieve a better society. This means that by combining those verses that deal with law in the Qur'ān with those verses which speak about methods of teaching, it is hoped that a dynamic society can be created and developed.

We can see that the methods of teaching in the Qur'ān are still suitable for schools today. The eight methods which have been put forward can be used at the kindergarten level, in primary and secondary schools, and even in centres of higher learning. The method of teaching has ceased to be a problem. The only things required to be done are adjustments concerning the material used and the content and scope of the syllabus.

Year after year, we can see that the method of teaching the Qur'ān does not represent the whole or complete method as outlined in the Qur'ān. The method used to teach the Qur'ān depends heavily on memorisation. However memorisation is only a small part of the complete or total method of teaching the Qur'ān. It seems that the methods used to teach the Qur'ān are not in full agreement with the methods of teaching contained in the Qur'ān itself.

WORKS CITED

- ‘Abd Allāh, ‘Abd al-Rahmān Sālih. *Educational Theory: A Qur’ānic Outlook*. Mecca: Ummul Qūrā University, 1982.
- ibn Abū Daud, Abū Bakr, ‘Abd Allāh. *Kitāb al-Masāḥif*. Edited by Arthur Jeffery. Cairo: al-Maṭba‘ah al-Rahmāniyah, 1355/1936.
- Abū al-Qāsim, Hibat Allāh b. Salamah. *al-Nāsikh wa’l mansūkh*. Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Halabī, 1387/1967.
- Abū ‘Ubaid, ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Bakrī. *Mu‘jam Mā Ista‘jam*. Cairo: 1954.
- al-Ahwānī, Ahmad Fuād. *al-Tarbiyah fi’l Islām*. Cairo: Dār al-Ma‘ārif. 1968.
- ‘Alā’ al-Dīn, ‘Alī al-Muttaqī. *Kanz al-‘Ummāl fi Sunan al-Aqwāl wa’l Af‘āl*. 12 vols. Haiderabad: Majlis Dā’irah al-Ma‘ārif al-‘Uthmāniyyah, 1950.
- Anderson, J. N. D. "The Significance of Islamic Law in the World Today". *The American Journal of Comparative Law* (AJCL) 9 (1960), 187-198.

Anīs, Ibrāhīm.

Fi'l Lahajāt al-ʿArabiyyah.

Cairo: Maktabah al-Anjalu
al-Misriyyah, 1965.

al-ʿAʿzamī, Muḥammad
Mustafā.

Kuttāb al-Nabī. Beirut:
al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1974.

al-Balādhurī,
Aḥmad b. Yahyā.

Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān. Edited
by Ṣalāh al-Dīn al-Munajjid.
Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahdah
al-Misriyyah, 1957.

ibn al-Bārizī,

*Nāsikh al-Qurʾān al-ʿAzīm wa
Mansūkhīh.* Beirut: Muassasah
al-Risalah, 1983.

Bell, Richard.

Introduction to the Qurʾān.
Edinburgh: Edinburgh University
Press, 1953.

Bucaille, Maurice.

*The Bible, the Qurʾān and
Science.* Translated by
Alastair D. Pannell and
the Author. n.p. n.d.

al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad b.
Ismāʿīl.

al-Ṣaḥīḥ. 9 vols. in 3. Cairo:
Mustafā al-Bābī al-Halabī,
1377.

Burton, John.

The Collection of the Qurʾān.
Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press, 1979.

"Those Are the high Flying
Cranes" *Journal of Semitic*

- Studies* 15 (1970), 246-265.
Al-nāsikh wa al-Mansūkh.
 Ph. D. Thesis, School of
 Oriental and African Studies,
 London, October 1969.
Abū ʿUбайд al-Qāsim b. Sallām's
K. al-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh.
 Cambridge: Trustees of the
 "E. J. W. Gibb memorial",
 1987.
- Coulson, N. J. *A History of Islamic Law*.
 Edinburgh: Edinburgh University
 Press, 1964.
- Cowan, J. M. *The Hans Wehr Dictionary of*
Modern Written Arabic. New
 York: Spoken Language
 Services, Inc. 1976.
- Cragg, Kenneth. *The Mind of the Qur'ān*.
 London: George Allen & Unwin
 Ltd., 1973.
- al-Dānī, Abū ʿAmr,
 ʿUthmān b. Saīd. *Kitāb al-Naqt*. Edited by
 Muḥammad Ṣādiq Qamḥawī. Cairo:
 Maktabah Kulliyyāt Azhariyyah,
 1978.
- al-Muqniʿ fī Rasm Maṣāḥif*
al-Amsār. Edited by Muḥammad
 Ṣādiq Qamḥawī. Cairo: Maktabah

- Darāz, Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh. *Kullīyyāt Azhariyyah*, 1978.
al-Naba' al-ʿAzīm. Cairo: Maṭbaʿah al-Saʿādah, 1969.
 "The Origin of Islam". In *Islam- The Straight Path*. Edited by Kenneth W. Morgan. New York: The Ronald Press Company, n.d.
- Denning, Alfred. *The Changing Law*. London: Stevens and Sons Ltd., 1953.
- al-Dihlawī, Shāh Walī Allāh *al-Fawz al-kabīr fī Uṣūl al-Tafsīr*. Karachi: Nūr Muḥammad, 1960.
- Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥīm. "Elementary Schools in Hijaz During the half Century". *Islamic Culture* 60 (July 1986), 35-60.
- Duhaish, ʿAbd al-Laṭīf b. *The Educational Ideas of the Muslims in the Middle Ages*. M.A. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1937.
- Fahmy, A. H. "The Alleged Debt of Islamic to Roman Law". *The Law Quarterly Review* 67 (1951), 81-102.
- FitzGerald, S. V. *Ihyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn*. 4 vols.
- al-Ghazālī, Abū Ḥamid,

Muḥammad b. Muḥammad.

Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah al-Kubrā, n.d.

Goldziher, I.

Muslim Studies. 2 vols.

Edited by S. M. Stern.

London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1971.

Graveson, R. H.

"The Scale of Justice" in *Law, Justice and Equity*.

Edited by R. H. Code Holland and G. Schwarzenberger.

London: Sir Isaac

Pitman and Sons Ltd., 1967.

Habachy, Saba.

"The system of Nullities in Muslim Law", *AJCL* 13 (1964), 61-72.

ibn Hajar, al-ʿAsqallānī,
Ahmad b. ʿAlī.

Fath al-Bārī bi Sharḥ al-Bukhārī. 17 vols. Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1378/1959.

al-Ḥakīm, Abū ʿAbd Allāh,
Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh.

al-Mustadrak. Haiderabad: Dā'irah al-Maʿārif al-Nizamiyyah, 1334.

al-Ḥamadhānī, Abū Bakr,
Muḥammad b. Mūsā.

Kitāb al-Iʿtibār fī Bayān al-Nāsikh wa'l Mansūkh min al-Athar. Haiderabad: Dā'irah al-Maʿārif, 1359.

Ḥammūdah, ʿAbd al-Wahhāb.

al-Qirāʾāt wa'l Lahajāt.

- Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahdah al-Misriyyah, 1948.
- al-Farā'id al-Durriyyah.*
- Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1982.
- al-Ihkām fī 'Usūl al-Ahkām.*
- 8 vols. in 2. Cairo: 196_.
- New Researches into the Composition and Exegesis of the Qoran.* London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1902.
- Sirāh al-Nabiy.* 4 vols. Edited by Muḥammad Muḥy al-Dīn 'Abd al-Hamīd. Dār al-Fikr, 1981.
- History of The Arabs.* London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1951.
- Mohammedanism.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1916.
- al-Nashr fī'l Qirā'āt al-⁶al-Āshr.* 2 vols. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-⁶Ilmiyyah, n.d.
- The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān.* Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1938.
- Muqaddimatān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān.* Edited by Arthur Jeffery. Cairo: Maktabah al-Khaniji, 1954.
- Hava, J. G.
- ibn Hazm, Abū Muḥammad, 'Ali.
- Hirschfeld, Hartwig.
- ibn Hishām, Abū Muḥammad, 'Abd al-Mālik
- Hitti, Philip K.
- Hurgronje, C. Snouck.
- ibn Jazarī, Abū al-Khair, Muḥammad b. Muḥammad.
- Jeffery, Arthur.

ibn Kathīr,

Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm.

4 vols. Cairo: ʿIsā al-Bābī
al-Halabī. 1950.

K. Faḍāʾil al-Qur'ān [appendix
Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-ʿAzīm.
vol. 4.]

ibn Khaldūn.

The Muqaddimah. Translated by
Franz Rosenthal. Abridged
and edited by N. J. Dawood.
London: Routledge and Kegan
Paul, 1987.

Khan, Ajmal M.

"An Inquiry into the Earliest
Collection of the Qur'ān",
Studies in Islam 1 (1964),
175-212.

al-Khū'ī, al-Mūsawī,

al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān.

Abū al-Qāsim.

Beirut: Dār al-Zahrā', 1981.

Lane, E. W.

Arabic English Lexicon. In
2 books. London: Williams and
Norgate, 1863.

Mackenzie, T.

Studies in Roman Law.

Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1862.

ibn Manẓūr, Abū al-Faḍl,

Lisān al-ʿArab. 20 vols. in

Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b.

10. Bulaq: 1307.

Jalāl al-Dīn.

Mehren, Von, and Gordley.

The Civil Law System. 2nd
edition. Boston: Little Brown,

- 1977.
- Muir, William. *The Life of Mahomet*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1878.
- The Coran*. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1896.
- ibn al-Nadīm. *al-Fihrist*. Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijārah al-Kubrā, 1929.
- al-Nawawī, Yahyā b. Sharaf. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ al-Nawawī*. 18 vols. in 6. Cairo: al-Matba'ah al-Miṣriyyah wa Maktabatu hā, n.d.
- Phenix, Philip H. *Philosophy of Education*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958.
- Pickthall, Muhammad Marmaduke. *The meaning of the Glorious Koran*. London: Dar al-Shoura, n. d.
- Post, Gordon C. *An Introduction to the Law*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1963.
- Putney, E. W. "Moslem Philosophy of Education". *Muslim World* 6 (1916), 188-194.
- al-Qastallānī, Abū al-Abbās, Shihāb al-Dīn Ahmad b. Muhammad. *Irshād al-Sārī li Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. 10 vols. Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1305.

ibn al-Qayyim, al-Jawziyyah,
Shams al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh,
Muhammad b. Abū Bakr.

The Qur'ān.

al-Qurtubī, Abū 'Abd Allāh,
Muhammad b. Ahmad.

ibn Qutaibah, Abū Muhammad,
'Abd Allāh b. Muslim.

al-Rāzī, Abū 'Abd Allāh,
Muhammad b. 'Umar.

al-Ṣabūnī, Muhammad 'Alī.

Ṣalīh, Subhī,

ibn Sayyid al-Nās.

Schacht, Joseph.

*Ilām al-Muwaqqi'īn 'an Rabb
al-'Ālamīn*. 4 vols. Edited by
Muhammad Muḥy al-Dīn 'Abd al-
Ḥamid. Cairo: Maktabah al-
Tijāriyyah al-Kubrā, 1955.

al-Jāmi' li Ahkām al-Qur'ān.
20 vols. in 10. Cairo: Dār
al-Kutub al-Misriyyah, 1950-
1965.

Ta'wīl Mushkil al-Qur'ān.
Edited by Sayyid Ahmad Saqr.
Cairo: 'Isā al-Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī,
1954.

al-Tafsīr al-Kabīr. 32 vols.
in 16. Teheran: Dār al-Kutub
al-Ilmiyyah, 1970.

al-Tibyān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān.
n.p. 1980.

Mabāhith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān.
Beirut: Dār al-Ilm li'l
Malāyīn. 1985.

Uyūn al-Athar. 2 vols. in 1.
Beirut: Dār al-'Afāq al-
Jadīdah, 1982.

*An Introduction to Islamic
Law*. London: Oxford

al-Shāfi'ī,
Muhammad b. Idrīs.
Shāhīn, 'Abd al-Sabūr.

al-Suyūṭī, Jalāl al-Dīn,
'Abd al-Rahmān.

al-Ṭabarī, Abū Ja'far,
Muhammad b. Jarīr.

Ibn Taimiyyah,

ibn Tallā'

Tibawī, A. L.

University Press, 1964.

al-Risālah. Cairo: Mustafā al-
Bābī al-Halabī, 1358/1940.

Tārīkh al-Qur'ān. Cairo: Dar
al-Qalam, 1966.

al-Itqān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān.

4 vols. in 2. Edited by
Muhammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm.
Baidar: Manshūrāt al-Ridā,
1343.

*al-Durr al-Manthūr fī al-
Tafsīr bi'l Ma'thūr*. 6 vols.
Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifah, n. d.

*Jāmi' al-Bayān 'an Ta'wīl Āy
al-Qur'ān*. 30 vols. in 12.
Cairo: Mustafā al-Bābī al-
Halabī, 1954.

Iqtidā' al-Ṣirāt al-Mustaqīm.
Edited by Muhammad Ḥamid
al-Faqīy. Beirut: Dār al-
Ma'rifah, n. d.

Aqḍīyah Rasūl Allāh. Edited by
Muhammad Diā' al-Rahmān al-
A'zamī. Beirut: Dār
Kutub al-Lubnānī, 1982.

"Muslim Education in the
Golden Age of the Caliphate".

Wherry, E. M.

al-Zanjānī, Abū ʿAbd Allāh,

al-Zarkashī, Badr al-Dīn,
Muhammad b. ʿAbd Allāh.

al-Zurqānī, Muḥammad ʿAbd
al-ʿAzīm.

Zwemer, S. M.

Islamic Culture 28 (July
1954), 418-438.

*A Comprehensive Commentary On
The Qur'ān*. London: Trubner
& Co., 1882.

Tārīkh al-Qur'ān. Beirut:
Muassasah al-ʿAlamī li'l
Maṭbūʿāt, 1969.

al-Burhān fī ʿUlūm al-Qur'ān.
4. vols. Edited by Muḥammad
Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm.
Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Maktabah
al-ʿAṣriyyah, 1391/1972.

*Manāhil al-ʿIrfān fī ʿUlūm al-
Qur'ān*. 2 vols. Beirut: Dār
Ihyā' al-Turāth al-ʿArabīy,
n. d.

Arabia: The Cradle of Islam.
Edinburgh and London: Oliphant
Anderson & Ferrier, 1900.

Encyclopaedias

Encyclopaedia of Islam, 1924. New ed. 1963-1965, S. v. "al-
Kur'an," by A.T. Welch.

Encyclopedia of Religion, 1987.

Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, 1918.